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June 12th - Anti-Child Labour Day

‘Let us vow to eradicate child labour’

Message of the Hon’ble
Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami
on the occasion of Anti-Child Labour Day
(English Translation).

Every year June 12th is observed as Anti-Child Labour Day to create awareness against child labour and to stress the need to protect the rights of children.

Sending children for employment is a very cruel act when they should be in school and enjoy the pleasure of school life. It is the children who decide the country’s future. It is our bounden duty to create a generation of healthy children with knowledge and strength by providing them the necessary education and taking care of their welfare.

To eradicate child labour completely from the State, the Tamil Nadu Government, treading the path of Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, retrieves child labourers from work spots, provides them special training and admits them in regular schools. The Government provides them uniforms at no cost, school books and note-books, school bags, shoes, bicycles, laptops, educational implements, nutritious noon meals and free bus passes to commute to schools.

Former child labourers pursuing higher studies are also given Rs.500/- as monthly stipend for the entire education period. The Government has been implementing these measures keenly.

The State Government has also been implementing the amended Central Government Act which prohibits children and adolescent children from employment in hazardous jobs.

Every parent should realize that child labour is a disgrace to the Nation. Parents should send their children to school and give them education, which is an eternal wealth. Let us all take a vow on this occasion to bring up our children as children and not as workers and create a world free of child labourers. I appeal to all to support the measures taken by the Tamil Nadu Government, which is following the path of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and make Tamil Nadu a Child labour-free State.

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"It is the bounden duty of every citizen to protect the country's natural resources, which apart from their beauty also earn us wealth."

Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami
- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

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First Wrapper

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru.Edappadi K. Palaniswami** and Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs (Independent charge), **Thiru. Hardeep Singh Puri** flagged off at Chennai Egmore Metro Rail station on 25.05.2018, passenger services in two underground metro rail stretches under the Chennai Metro Rail service -- the green corridor route between Nehru Park and Central and the blue corridor route between Chinnamalai and AG-DMS.

Opening 2 underground Metro corridors, Chief Minister declares...

'Investment of Rs.80,000 crore for Phase II will boost economic growth, create jobs'

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** inaugurating the underground Metro Rail Services between Nehru Park and Central Metro Railway Station and between Little Mount and A.G.-D.M.S point, on 25.05.2018 at the Egmore Metro Railway Station, Chennai *(English Translation)*.

Paying obeisance to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

The Chennai Metro Rail Project is a symbol to transport upgradation in Chennai on par with what is there in developed overseas cities. I am happy to declare open six new metro stations under this project – Egmore, Central, Saidapet, Nandanam, Teynampet and A.G. - D.M.S. and dedicate, jointly with the Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Housing

and Urban Affairs Thiru. Hardeep Singh Puri, the underground metro rail passenger services between Nehru Park and Central Metro Station on the green line and between Little Mount and A.G.- D.M.S. on the blue line.

Hon'ble Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Thiru. P. Dhanapal, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Thiru. O. Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Finance and Shipping Thiru. Pon.Radhakrishnan, Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries and Personnel, Administrative Reforms Thiru. D.Jayakumar, Hon'ble Minister for Industries Thiru. M.C.Sampath, Hon'ble Ministers, Respected MPs and MLAs, Chief Secretary to Tamil Nadu Government Dr. Girija Vaidyanathan, top officials of the Central and State Governments, Chairperson of Tamil Nadu Text Book and Educational Services Corporation Tmt.B. Valarmathi, His Excellency Ambassador of Japan to India, Japan Embassy at New Delhi, Consul General of Japan in Chennai, Chief Representative of JICA at New Delhi, Principal Secretary, Department of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Dr. T.V. Somanathan, Managing Director of the Chennai Metro Rail Limited Thiru. Pankaj Kumar Bansal who is to propose a vote of thanks, former MPs and MLAs, former representatives of Local Bodies, officials of the Government, Metro Rail Project, workers, newspaper and media friends, elders, ladies - at the outset I offer my grateful respects to all of you.

The evolution of public transport astounds us. From marathon walks with aching feet to reach a place, it has now come to air travel, passing through the phases of horse ride, travel by horse drawn and bullock drawn carts, fuel driven surface transport and seafare. The compulsion to change the mode of transport, dictated by needs, made man to use his intelligence and he was able to simplify and modernize transport with the help of science and technology. Metro rail is the ultra modern development in the mode of common transport. If train travel on elevated tracks surprised us, today we are enjoying the magnificent and thrilling underground travel with air-conditioned facility. This is yet another great scientific development achieved by the human race.

To reduce traffic congestion in Chennai, cut short travel time and make travel easy and convenient, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, with a visionary outlook, provided the needed financial assistance for the Metro Rail project. The result is, today we have passenger train service in different routes. This metro rail transport is integrated with bus, suburban trains and mass rapid transit system.

In the 22 km long "green" line under the Chennai Metro Rail Project, passenger train service has already commenced between Airport and Nehru Park stations. With the commissioning of the underground train service between Nehru Park and Central Metro stations, now, the whole stretch of "green" line has been thrown open for passenger train service.

In the 23 km long "Blue" line, passenger train service is already available between Airport and Little Mount. With the commissioning of the underground train service between Little Mount and A.G.-D.M.S., today, Metro Rail service is available for a stretch of 13 kms in this line. Work is in full swing on tunnelling the balance of the 10 kms stretch – from A.G.-D.M.S. to Washermenpet - as also on construction of Metro Railway Stations. Works are expected to be completed before the end of this year.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma inaugurated train passenger services on elevated tracks between Koyambedu and Alandur on 29.06.2015 (10.15 km), between Chennai Airport and Little Mount (8.6 kms) and between Alandur and St.Thomas Mount (1.2 Kms) on 21.09.2016.

Also, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma laid the foundation stone on 23.07.2016 for the extension (9.05 kms) of the first phase of the Metro Rail Project – from Washermenpet to Thiruvottiyur-Wimco Nagar-estimated to cost Rs.3,770 crore. Former Central Minister for Urban Development and at present the Vice President of India, Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu, helped a lot to get Central Government's approval for this extension project. On this occasion, I thank him for his help. There is considerable progress in the construction and organizational works of this extension project and the works are expected to be completed by June 2020.

I gladly wish to recall on this occasion the inauguration by me, jointly with former Central Minister for Urban Development and present Vice President of India Thiru. Venkaiah Naidu of the 7.4 km long first underground rail track between Koyambedu and Nehru Park on 14.05.2017.

I wish to mention the special features of the Chennai Metro Rail Project at this function:

- Among the functioning Metro Rail Projects in India, Chennai Metro Rail Project alone lays the major part of its track underground;
- The project is designed and implemented to have connectivity with multi-mode transport hubs such as Chennai Central and Egmore railway stations, Koyambedu Mofussil bus stand, Mass Rapid Transit System and Airport.
- In the interest of passengers, doors have provided in the platforms of underground Metro Rail Stations to prevent dust pollution and retain air-conditioning effects. This saves power and ensures passenger safety.
- Facility to generate power automatically has been provided when the Metro Train is stopped.
- Facility to contact the driver of the train is provided, to enable differently-abled persons travelling by the train to take more time to get down from the train safely.
- Onward journey to homes from Metro Rail Stations has been facilitated jointly with

transport aggregates like Ola, Uber and by auto rickshaw.

• Arrangements have been made to operate small buses of the Metro Transport Corporation from Metro Rail Stations and via those stations.

• Facility to hire bicycle and motor cycle is also provided.

• The top 'Platinum Award' of the IGBG Green Mass Rapid Transit System has been presented to Chennai Metro Rail Limited for designing, constructing and operating the 13 elevated Rail Stations and the 7 underground Rail Stations of the Chennai Metro Rail in an environment-friendly way.

• So far, 1.64 crore passengers have used the metro rail service. The number is expected to go up several fold in all its corridors inclusive of the underground service inaugurated today.

Hon'ble Amma's Government feels that the 54 km long Metro Rail phase I is inadequate to manage the growing traffic congestion in Greater Chennai and it has decided to implement 3 corridors in the phase II of the project. It has approved in principle, execution of three corridors to a length of 107.55 km - from Madhavaram to Siruseri, Chennai Mofussil Bus stand at Koyambedu to Light House and from Madhavaram to Sholinganallur –at an estimated cost of Rs.79,961 crore.

To get Central Government's approval and funds and to get loan assistance from Japan International Co-operation Agency for this project, the State Government has written to the Central Ministry for Housing and Urban Affairs. I kindly request Hon'ble Minister of State for Housing and Urban Affairs Thiru. Hardeep Singh Puri to give early approval and sanction of Central share of funds for the Phase-II of Chennai Metro Rail Project.

Of the 107.55 km long 3 corridors, the Japan International Co-operation Agency has come forward to extend credit facility to one corridor – Madhavaram to Sholinganallur - and a section of another corridor Madhavaram to Siruseri – up to Koyambedu from Madhavaram – working out to a total length of 52.01 km. Once the funds are released, construction work will commence. Hon'ble Amma's Government is making efforts to get assistance from the

Asian Development Bank for the corridor Chennai Mofussil Bus Stand to Light House (17.12 km).

To develop Chennai City to world standards, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma implemented many schemes through various Departments. This Government that follows in the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is also working for the development of Greater Chennai for fulfilling her aspirations. I am proud to say that Chennai City is turning into a new big City with all modern facilities to attract tourists from all over the world. Metro Rail is particularly a boon to the people of Chennai and to visitors from other towns. I am grateful to all officers, engineers and workers who tirelessly worked round-the-clock for the completion of this project.

As I have already announced in the Assembly, the task of preparing a detailed project report for a new Metro Rail Project for Coimbatore City has been entrusted to Chennai Metro Rail Company. KfW, the German financial institution provides funds for this work.

The Chennai Metro Rail Limited has also taken up the job of preparing a detailed project report for altering the fourth corridor under phase - II to go up to Poonamallee via Vadapalani and Porur from Light house.

Besides, a survey will be undertaken to extend the Metro Rail track that terminates at Airport to the proposed mofussil bus stand at Kelambakkam Village near Vandalur and to integrate it with the rapid transit systems in Chennai City.

When all the works under the phase - I (45 kms) of Metro Rail Project, in the extended project (9.05 km) and in the proposed 107.55 km long phase - II programme are completed, Greater Chennai City will become a premier City in the Country with a transport infrastructure of global standards. This will greatly facilitate easy and speedy travel from any part of the City to any other part. There is no doubt that Chennai City will turn into a congestion free City.

About Rs.80,000 crore is proposed to be invested under the Chennai Metro Rail Project Phase-II for strengthening the Metro Rail transport structures. Such a huge investment is expected to boost economic growth in the Greater Chennai area and create job opportunities.

I once again thank the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the Department of Economic Affairs of Government of India and the Government of Japan and Japan International Co-operation Agency for extending full support for implementing this prestigious Chennai Metro Rail Project.

I thank all the good hearts who have made the arrangements for the excellent conduct of this function.

Anna Naamam Vaazhga! Valarga Puratchi Thalaivarin Pugazh!, Thodarga Maanbumigu Puratchi Thalaivi Ammavin Aatchi!

Nandri! Vanakkam!

Chief Minister nails DMK complicity in starting and expansion of Sterlite

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** in the Assembly on 29.05.2018 on the call attention notice over the violent incidents that took place in the agitation for demanding the permanent closure of the Sterlite Copper Smelting Unit at Thoothukudi *(English Translation)*.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir,

Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition speaks about the Sterlite issue. Earlier the leader of the Congress party mentioned about it. He said it is a struggle lasting 100 days. They have been agitating for 22 years. He should know this first - (the agitation is) not of today or yesterday. They are agitating with the intention that only this Government will solve the issue. That is why a solution has been found.

Hon'ble Speaker,

First, I wish to record my deep condolences and sorrow to the families of those who died in the agitation. I have already condoled their deaths. Through this House I express my deep sense of condolence to those families.

Hon'ble Speaker,

The Sterlite copper smelter factory of the Vedanta Group of companies is functioning in the Meelavittan Village of Thoothukudi District for the last 22 years. Following complaints of gas leakage in the factory on 23.03.2013, resulting in people suffering from burning sensation in the eyes, a show cause notice was issued to the factory management on 24.03.2013 and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma issued orders on 29.03.2013 for the closure of the factory and disconnection of electricity. Immediately thereafter, power was disconnected and the factory was closed. The first bench of the National Green Tribunal which heard the Sterlite Management's petition opposing the closure of the factory, gave an interim order permitting the functioning of the factory again. It gave its final verdict on 08.08.2013. Opposing this order, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma went on appeal to the Supreme Court in 2013. The case is being heard now.

When the consent order for the operation of the factory expired in March 2018, the

Sterlite Management applied for renewal. The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board rejected the renewal application on 09.04.2018 on the ground the management had not fulfilled the conditions laid earlier. The Sterlite factory did not function from that date.

The Sterlite Management appealed to the Appellate Authority against the Board's order. At the hearing on 04.05.2018, the Additional Advocate General of Tamil Nadu who appeared for the Board, vehemently argued against permitting the functioning of the factory. Newspapers of the day prominently featured this. So the Pollution Control Board had cancelled their application on 09.04.2018. From that day, the factory was not functioning.

At Kumareddiyapuram Village in Thoothukudi, people carried on agitations for many days peacefully. Hundreds of people, belonging to various organizations staged demonstrations in front of the Thoothukudi District Collectorate and presented petitions with police protection on 05.02.2018, 14.02.2018, 26.02.2018, 26.03.2018, 28.03.2018, 02.04.2018, 09.04.2018, 12.04.2018 and 13.04.2018. On those occasions, the District Collector explained to them, the steps taken by the Tamil Nadu Government and urged them to drop their agitation. If particular mention is to be made of such meetings:

• Talks were held under the aegis of the Sub-Collector when about 500 persons demonstrated in front of the Chidambaram Nagar bus stop in Meelavittan Village on 12.02.2018 and a section of people engaged in agitation in front of M.G.R. Park on the Thoothukudi-Palayamkottai road.

• Following this, the Thoothukudi Sub-Collector visited the areas South Veerapandiyapuram and T. Kumara Giri in Ottapidaram Taluk on 28.03.2018 and held talks. During the talks, he told the protesters that people's interests would be totally safeguarded and steps would be taken as per law in the Sterlite issue. He requested them to drop their agitation.

• On 02.04.2018, about 800 persons of the Anti-Sterlite Movement met the District Collector and presented a petition for the closure of the factory. On the same day, about 200 persons including those from different political parties, staged a 'sit-in' strike at Kumareddiyapuram. Also, on the same day, about 200 persons staged demonstrations at places like Pandarampatti and V.O.C. Arts College. The District Collector told the agitators about the readiness of the District administration to hold talks and requested all the protesters to participate in the talks.

• On 09.04.2018, Villagers 30 to 50 in strength held demonstrations in places like Kumareddiyapuram, Pandarampatti, Sankaraberi, South Veerapandiyapuram, Meelavittan, Madathur, P & T colony, 3rd Mile, Silverpuram, Murugesan Nagar and Madhavan Nagar. On the same day, about 700 persons assembled in front of the Collectorate and indulged in road roko and in an agitation in the ground floor of the office. The District Collector met the Villagers, informed them that the Government was acting with people's interest in mind and requested them not to engage in agitations.

• On 13.04.2018, 200 persons on behalf of Students Federation of India staged a 'sit-in'

strike in the District Collectorate.

• On 14.04.2018, members of the general public in strengths of 30 to 40 staged demonstrations at Sankaraberi, South Veerpandiyapuram, Meelavittan, Madathur, Silverpuram, P & T Colony, 3rd Mile, Murugesan Nagar, Madhavan Nagar, Ceylon colony, Fathima Nagar and Thevar colony.

• On that day, the Tahsildar of Ottapidaram met the people of South Veerapandiyapuram and invited them for talks on 16.04.2018 and they too agreed but none turned up.

• On the same day, the Thoothukudi Tahsildar met the people agitating in the Thoothukudi Panimaya Madha church premises and invited them for talks; people consented but no one came for the talks.

• From 17.04.2018 to 19.05.2018, people in Villages around the Sterlite factory, held demonstrations in their respective Villages in groups of less than 50 in numbers.

From 12.02.2018 to 25.04.2018, Government officials including Thoothukudi Collector, Sub-Collector and Tahsildar held 14 rounds of talks with the members of the Agitation Committee and explained the strong legal steps taken by the Government.

Hence, I wish to inform the Opposition Congress Leader that the District Collector and the Sub-Collector held talks with the Agitation Committee members 14 times.

Besides, the Hon'ble Minister for Environment issued a Statement on 31.03.2018 explaining the Tamil Nadu Government's stand on the issue. Likewise, The District Collector of Thoothukudi issued a press release on 14.04.2018, clearly explaining the Tamil Nadu Government's stand and many newspapers published it. The Pollution Control Board had rejected the factory management's application. That was publicized in all newspapers through a press release. The factory management sought permission from the Board for operating the factory for another 5 years. The news that Hon'ble Amma's Government had cancelled the permission on 09.04.2018 was publicized through newspapers so that the people of the District know about it.

On 20.05.2018, the Thoothukudi Sub-Collector held talks with the Members of the Agitation Committee. After the talks, the Committee Members agreed to drop their agitation of laying siege to the District Collectorate but stage instead a peaceful agitation for a day without creating any law and order problem at the playground near the Thoothukudi old bus stand. However, a section of the Committee Members did not agree to it and announced that the agitation to lay siege would be conducted as planned.

Hence, 2,000 police personnel were put on duty there as a precautionary measure. Also, the District Collector, Thoothukudi, issued a ban order under Sec. 144 of the Cr.P.C.

However, contrary to the decision to which they had agreed to -- to hold a peaceful agitation, just to draw the attention -- people in thousands from Madathur, Pandarampatti, Meelavittan, Therespuram and Kuruspuram areas started arriving at around 10 a.m. on 22.05.2018. The DMK MLA and North District Secretary Tmt. Geetha Jeevan, with 200 DMK personnel went in a procession around 9 a.m. for participating in the agitation. Persons from some other organizations also participated

in the agitation. On their instigation, and to pressure the Government, they suddenly laid siege to the Collectorate and the Sterlite factory in contravention of the ban order promulgated under Sec.144 cr.p.c.

Some miscreants infiltrated into this crowd and started rioting by stoning the police, chasing and attacking them, damaging the Collectorate by hurling stones and by setting on fire 35 Government Department vehicles, 2 Police vehicles and 110 private vehicles parked in the Collectorate complex. The innocent general public has agitated several times. As you say, for 99 days they held agitations. No incident took place then. Earlier too, they conducted agitations. No incident took place. Hence to create embarrassment to the Government, some miscreants infiltrated into the crowd and indulged in such acts. I wish to state that police will find out all these things in a legal way.

Also, 24 four-wheelers and one two-wheeler, parked in the nearby staff quarters of the Sterlite factory were burnt down. The staff quarters of Sterlite factory is adjacent to the District Collectorate. Hundreds of people reside there. Some miscreants went there and set the vehicles on fire. The protesters also damaged the office of the District Industrial Centre, the Thoothukudi South Police Station and different commercial establishments also.

When the protesters tried to enter the Collectorate and the quarters of Sterlite staff, police tried to stop them and to bring their violence under control, safeguard the lives and belongings of people and to prevent greater damage to public properties, teargas shells were fired and there was a lathi charge also.

Police asked the protesters to disperse several times when they pelted stones at commercial establishments and offices endangering life and belongings. As they continued in their violence, Police, in an unavoidable situation, took action after issuing adequate warnings and dispersed them for protecting the lives and belongings of the people.

That evening, a crowd that assembled at Therespuram, laid siege to the Thoothukudi Police Station (North), Thoothukudi Central Police Lines and the camp offices of the District Collector and the Superintendent of Police and threw a petrol bomb into Thoothukudi Police Station complex (North). Despite warnings by Police, they continued to indulge in violence and tried to enter the camp office with the intention of damaging Government properties. In unavoidable circumstances, police dispersed them by taking action after adequate warnings.

When I heard of this matter, I summoned the Director General of Police immediately, learnt about the incidents that took place and issued orders for speedy action to restore peace in Thoothukudi. Following these incidents, police were posted in important places in adequate numbers on protection duty. By patrolling Thoothukudi City, Police saw to it that no untoward incident took place.

In this situation, on 23.05.2018, a crowd, in the garb of relatives of the injured persons getting treatment at the Thoothukudi Government Hospital, assembled at the hospital in contravention of the ban order and tried to disturb peace. Police dispersed them. When the leader of the Makkal Needhi Mayyam Katchi visited the hospital to meet the injured, a crowd gathered at the hospital as if to see him,

but did not disperse even after the leader left the hospital. As the crowd tried to disturb the peace in the hospital complex, the police dispersed them. They re-assembled in Anna Nagar area near the VVD signal and indulged in violence by setting fire to belongings of the police and people, and attacked them. The crowd did not disperse even after bursting of teargas shells and lathi charging after adequate warning but continued to indulge in violence. To disperse them, the police took, after adequate warnings, appropriate action as an unavoidable measure and brought the situation under control. In these incidents, some protesters and police personnel were injured and 2 Police Department buses, 2 vehicles of the Agriculture Department, one private vehicle and 2 liquor shops were set on fire and damaged.

Earlier, when the Hon'ble Opposition Leader Thiru. M.K. Stalin went in his car on Jayaraj road, accompanied by a convoy of vehicles, the protesters stoned the vehicles in the convoy, stopped the last vehicle – a Scorpio – of Thiru. Marimuthu, DMK Union Secretary of Vilathikulam (West), forced him to get down and torched his vehicle. So, it is not as if the protesters were welcoming the DMK. Their wrong-doings had been exposed to the people. The convoy had been attacked. A case has been filed for that. The Union Secretary was made to get down and the car was set on fire. From this it is to be understood against whom the people are venting their wrath. Six cars in the convoy were also damaged in stoning. The Thoothukudi central police has filed a case in this regard.

In these incidents 58 protesters and 72 police personnel were injured and were admitted to Government Hospital for treatment. The rioters damaged 196 vehicles belonging to the Government and the people by torching and pelting stones at them.

To provide the best treatment to these 58 injured persons, the Director of Medical Education, 20 specialist doctors in different disciplines, nurses and other medical staff were sent from Madurai and Tirunelveli.

Following receipt of information that miscreants were trying to incite violence and create scare among people by spreading information contrary to truth through the social media, the Tamil Nadu Government ordered telecommunication service providers to suspend Net connection for 5 days from 23.05.2018 so as to prevent rumours and the consequent law and order issues.

Of the protesters admitted to hospital for treatment of injuries sustained in the violent incidents on the days 22.05.2018 and 23.05.2018, 13 died. Of them, coroner inquest on bodies of 7 persons was conducted by Court-appointed panel (till 28.05.2018). Later autopsy was performed by doctors as per the procedures laid down by the Supreme Court and the bodies , as per High Court direction, are kept in the mortuary. As for the remaining six bodies, autopsy has not been conducted till 28.05.2018 as the relatives of the deceased are not co-operating for the coroner inquiry.

Now, the suspended NET service has been restored in the Districts of Tirunelveli, Kanniyakumari and Thoothukudi. Following Tamil Nadu Government's speedy action, normalcy has returned in Thoothukudi City from 26.05.2018. All forms of transport have

started plying; banks, offices, commercial establishments, eateries, vegetable market and shops have opened and transactions have commenced.

Hon'ble Opposition Congress Leader has said that an uneasy situation prevails there. Normalcy has returned now. I wish to inform him through you that a situation has been brought about by the steps taken by the Government where people travel freely anywhere without any fear.

From the day Villagers near the Sterlite factory started complaining about the factory's ill-effects on their health – not these 99 days as you say – this agitation started. Understanding the nature of the factory and the condition of the people, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma took necessary steps to close the factory. Hon'ble Amma's Government too stuck to that stand and continued to refuse permission for the operation of the factory.

The Central Government gave environmental clearance for the Sterlite factory on 16.01.1995. This was done when your Government was at the Centre. I am also saying the same thing. This clearance was given during your rule. Hence, you need not consider that this mistake was committed by the All India Anna DMK. It is the Government that gives permission for all things for any project -- from the first stage of constructing buildings. But, before declaring open the completed project, one should see whether all the stipulated conditions have been carried out. That is important. But that has not been followed here. That is the main issue now. People raise this as the issue. If the factory had been opened following those procedures, this problem would not have come up. You were blaming us but it is you who gave the licence.

Against this order, many public interest litigations were filed in the Madras High Court between 1996 and1998 when the DMK was ruling the State. The agitation is being conducted not since 99 days as the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition says but from 1996 when PILs began to be filed. The National Trust for Pure Environment, Thiru.Vai.Ko, General Secretary of MDMK and Thiru. Kanakaraj, Secretary, CITU, Thoothukudi District committee filed PILs seeking closure of the factory.

These cases also averred about the incidence of pollution and accidents on account of improper installation of safety measures in the Sterlite factory. The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board informed the High Court in this case that permission for the factory was granted after following all procedures and legalities and monitoring the activities of the factory continuously. The DMK Government was ruling the State then. Now, they are speaking about purity and honesty. They told the High Court that everything was alright with the factory. It was the DMK Government that was supportive of the factory then. This has been referred to in the High Court judgment delivered on 28.09.2010 in page 10, para 6. It said: "On the part of the Government of India and the State Government and also the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, it has been contended that all these procedures contemplated under law have been duly followed while granting permission to the company and periodical checks have been conducted regarding the affairs and activities of the company".

So, the then DMK Government filed this affidavit through the Pollution Control Board

in support of the factory. Today they are staging a drama. Hon'ble members should know who supported the factory and who closed it down. It has been recorded. It forms a part of the High Court judgment. It is very clear that the then Government, when the case was in the High Court, filed the affidavit through the Pollution Control Board. Did he not say that I am justifying. I am saying all these things so that the Hon'ble Member knows about them. There are a lot of things. You should hear them all. This is a big issue –an agitation being conducted for 22 years.

But the High Court, taking all the cases together, gave the following verdict:

1. Sterlite factory should be closed down immediately. Though the then DMK Government filed an affidavit through the Pollution Control Board, the High Court rejected it and ordered the closure of the factory.

2. Due compensation should be given to workers.

3. The District Collector of Thoothukudi should take steps to provide alternative jobs to workers.

The Management of the factory went in appeal against this order to the Supreme Court on 01.10.2010. On the same day – 01.10.2010 - the Supreme Court stayed the High Court order for closure. The defence filed in the DMK rule was responsible for the Supreme Court to issue such an order.

They got a stay order in one day from the Supreme Court. Today, they say that sufficient pressure has not been exerted by the Government. The High Court orders the closure of the factory. The management files an appeal in the Supreme Court for permission to continue operation of the factory. Immediately a stay is granted. If so, you should ponder to what extent they would have argued the case. Hence, it was they who had been supportive of the factory. If only they had argued in a proper way, stay would not have been granted.

When the cases were pending in the High Court, it was the then DMK Government which issued on 14.10.1996 the consent order for the Sterlite factory to operate.

It was in the DMK rule that permission was granted for the operation of the factory and for the production of 391 tonnes of copper and 1,060 tonnes of sulphuric acid per day. Hon'ble member said that we gave permission for the construction of the factory. But who gave the permission for the operation of the factory? It was the DMK. They should have given it after monitoring and scrutinising whether it would be proper or not. They had given permission to the factory for operation without examining whether the conditions stipulated for the operation had been followed or not.

The approval order should have been issued after ensuring proper installation of equipment for prevention of pollution and treatment of industrial waste water. Instead, what was the necessity to give the approval order hastily on 14.10.1996 for the operation of the factory when cases were pending in court? Why such haste? He says you were all supportive. Who hurried things? They were in a hurry. They opened the factory very speedily. It was Thiru.N.K.K. Periasamy who was the Minister for Environment when the approval order was issued. The factory first started its operations only during DMK rule.

To offset the sluggishness in sulphuric acid sales, the Sterlite Management indulged in the production of phosphoric acid by using the sulphuric acid. When phosphoric acid is produced in this manner, the poisonous fluorine gas that causes irritations in the lungs, throat, nose and eyes emanates out of it. Permission for the manufacture of that additional product was also given during the DMK rule. This was the greatest sin they committed. Today, they are mouthing words of righteousness and justice. You should realize that they are enacting a drama as if we have committed the wrong. Permission for the factory was renewed on 20.05.1999 – again in the DMK rule. That is, required permissions for safeguarding the commercial motive of Sterlite factory and for the management to earn more profit, were all given in the DMK rule. Thiru. Pongalur Palanisamy was the then Environment Minister.

Not only this. Permission for the second phase of expansion of the factory and permission for the operation of the factory were also issued in DMK's rule. The first was given on 02.11.2006 and the latter on 15.11.2006. These permissions increased copper production from 2.70 lakh tonnes to 3.60 lakh tonnes per year. Permission was also granted for the production, as by-products – of 12.60 lakh tonnes of sulphuric acid, 2.40 lakh tonnes of phosphoric acid and 7,500 tonnes of hydrofluorosilicic acid per year. The Environment Minister then was Thiru. Mohideen Khan.

For the expansion of this factory, 100 acres of land was given by the then Industries Minister, Hon'ble Chief Minister, the Respected Thiru. M. Karunanidhi on 30.04.2008. Renewal of the approval on 19.01.2009 and on 14.08.2009 as also the issue of approval order for the third phase expansion on 12.03.2009 were also given by the DMK Government. Thiru. Mohideen Khan was the Environment Minister then too.

It was the Opposition Leader Thiru.M.K.Stalin who today plays the fraudulent drama that Sterlite factory should be closed down, though as the then Industries Minister, he assigned 230.63 acres of land on 23.09.2009 for the second expansion of the factory. Pollution was already high and people could not bear it. At such a time, land was given through SIPCOT for the second phase of expansion of the factory and for bringing the second unit there, when M.K.Stalin was the Minister. Now, he is high on speechmaking. He has walked out of the House as he knows all these facts will come out. To hide the mistakes committed during the DMK's rule, Respected Leader of the Opposition M.K.Stalin is giving interviews often and trying to prove that he is innocent.

Permission for the first expansion of the factory was given on 22.09.2004. The then Central Minister for Environment was DMK's Thiru. Raja. People were already agitating. The High Court was hearing a public interest litigation on the matter. At such a time, if the Central Minister Thiru.Raja, belonging to the DMK gave permission for the first expansion of the factory, you should think who supported the Sterlite Management.

This is not all. In the Central Congress rule where the DMK was a coalition partner

• Permission was granted for the first expansion of Sterlite factory on 22.09.2004;

• Permission was granted for the second expansion on 09.08.2007; you (Congress) were ruling at the Centre;

• Permission was granted for the third expansion on 22.02.2008

• Permission was granted for the fourth expansion on 01.01.2009.

I don't know whether you know this historical background. I am detailing all these because all of you should know these things. None can hide these facts. Under the Right to Information Act, any one can get these details. I am bringing this information to the attention of this House. You have already permitted me. You (DMK) stated these incidents should not have taken place. You said it with remorse. If you had not permitted Sterlite, this issue would not have arisen at all. That is what I am trying to point out.

The Sterlite Management's case against the closure order was pending in the Supreme Court from DMK's rule itself. The firm stand taken by Hon'ble Amma after assuming power in 2011, made the Supreme Court to note, in its order of 02.04.2013, about the functioning of the factory for several years without renewing the approval order. The Court also fined the factory for causing damage to the environment and directed that the amount be kept as fixed deposit under the care of the Thoothukudi District Collector for 5 years and the interest accruing on the deposit be utilized for the betterment of the environment of the District. On the basis of that order, the factory was functioning.

In the meanwhile, the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, on the direction of Hon'ble Amma, ordered the closure of the factory on 29.03.2013 as the emission level of sulphur-di-oxide from the factory on 23.03.2013 was on a large scale. The Sterlite factory filed an appeal against this order in the National Green Tribunal on 01.04.2013 and got an interim stay on 31.05.2013.

In its final judgment on 08.08.2013, the NGT annulled the closure order. The factory resumed operation. Against the NGT's order of 08.08.2013, Hon'ble Amma filed a civil appeal in the Supreme Court on 27.09.2013.

The appeal referred to the large-scale emission of sulphur-di-oxide from the factory, the damage caused to the people on that account, the strong grounds cited by the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board and the failure of the factory to file its appeal in the State appellate authority under Sec.31, and sought the closure of the factory. The case came up for hearing on 29.07.2016 and is under pendency now.

The Management of the factory applied for the renewal of the approval order on 31.01.2018. The Board, as I have already mentioned, rejected the application on 09.04.2018, on the ground that the factory has not complied with the stipulated important conditions.

The Joint Chief Environment Engineer (Supervision), Tirunelveli inspected the Sterlite factory on 18.05.2018 and 19.05.2018 to verify whether the management abides by the Board's order. As he found the Sterlite Management was engaged in the preparatory works for operating the factory, the Board issued orders on 23.05.2018 for the closure of the factory and for the disconnection of electricity. On 24.05.2018, electricity connection was cut out.

As the power generated by the Sterlite factory is distributed through the sub-station of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, the factory cannot use the electricity that it generates nor can the factory be operated. Water supply to the factory has also been stopped.

On 25.04.1997, your Leader, the DMK President, former Chief Minister respected Thiru. M.Karunanidhi said in this very House: "It is not as if the Police Department alone has the great responsibility of seeing that not a single police firing takes place. All parties have that responsibility; the community leaders too". This is not my saying. I am quoting the former Chief Minister and DMK President's Statement in the Assembly. But the DMK MLA Tmt. Geetha Jeevan has participated in the agitation to lay siege, defying the police and the District Collector's ban order. Is it correct? Her own Leader had advised against doing such things. The MLA had defied that and the ban order. That is what I am pointing out.

I wish to draw your attention to the incidents of police action taken to manage law and order problems during the periods of DMK regime, particularly the loss of life in police firing and the inquiry commission set up as a follow up action.

He has spoken about the incidents that took place in the DMK's rule – much information he doled out -- and how inquiry commission should be set up. Hon'ble Speaker has expunged them. I will mention the incidents that took place in DMK's rule and the inquiry commission that followed.

• Three farmers died when police opened fire to quell the violence that broke out when the farmers' association agitated against the hike in electricity charges at Kanakkampalayam in the present Tiruppur District on 19.06.1970. This was during DMK's rule.

• When the Tamil Nadu Farmers Association called for a State-wide bandh on 05.07.1972, police opened fire in several places to control law and order. Eight persons were killed in Pethanaickenpalayam in Salem District, two in Ayyampalayam in Coimbatore District, one in Kovilpatti in Tirunelveli District, and three persons, one each at Sathur, Azhagapuri and Manamadurai in Ramanathapuram District – totally 14 farmers died in one day.

• Six persons died in the police firing opened during a clash between two castes at Devaram in the present Theni District on 16.09.1989. A commission was set up to inquire the incident under retired High Court Judge respected Thiru. Bhaskara.

Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition described the (present) inquiry commission as an eye-wash. If so, can I ask whether that commission which was set up was also an eye-wash? Then also a retired High Court Judge headed the commission.

• On 17.09.1989, some persons belonging to a particular community were arrested at Kandamanur in the present Theni District on 17.09.1989 and were kept in the Police Station. That community people attacked the Police Station and indulged in violence. To disperse them, police opened fire and 5 persons died.

To inquire into the incident, a commission, headed by the retired High Court Judge, Justice Thiru. Baskara was set up. Then too, only a retired High Court Judge was appointed in the DMK rule.

• When a particular community people indulged in violence while opposing the naming of a Government Transport Corporation after a leader at Sivakasi in Virudhunagar District on 07.05.1997, police opened fire and 3 persons died and 2 were injured. An inquiry commission headed by retired High Court Judge Justice Thiru Dhanraj was set up. So they have appointed only retired High Court Judges alone for inquiring into police firing. We have done the same thing.

• To control a communal clash at Ukkadam, Coimbatore City on 30.11.1997, police opened fire resulting in the death of 6 persons and injury to 10. An inquiry commission headed by retired High Court Judge Justice Thiru. Gokulakrishnan was set up.

• On 11.07.1998, police opened fire to control the violence that erupted between two groups at Saakottai in Sivagangai District, resulting in the death of 2 persons and injury to 7. An RDO inquiry was ordered. This was not inquired even by a retired Judge. In DMK's rule, police firing resulting in deaths was inquired into by a Revenue Divisional Officer.

• To control a clash between two caste groups at Thirupullani in Ramanathapuram District on 03.10.1998, police opened fire and two persons died; on the next day police opened fire in Surangkottai area to avert a clash, resulting in the death of three persons and injury to six persons. For these incidents, an RDO inquiry was ordered.

• While digging land at Devambalpattinam Village in Tiruvarur District on 04.01.1999, statues of deities were found and Revenue Department Officials took custody of them. Opposing that, Villagers indulged in violence. In the police firing that followed, three persons died and three others were injured. An RDO inquiry was instituted to inquire into the incident. For these deaths also, an RDO inquiry was ordered during DMK's rule.

• Violence erupted at a rally taken out on 23.07.1999, by the workers of Manjolai Thottam, Tirunelveli District, demanding higher wages. Of those who jumped into Tamirabarani river to escape the police lathi charge, 17 persons drowned. To inquire the incident, a Commission was appointed with retired Supreme Court Judge Justice Thiru. Mohan as the head. So, I wish to record in this House that for all such things inquiry commissions headed by retired Judges were set up.

• Following the death of a preventive detention prisoner at the Central jail, Chennai on 17.11.1999, some of the prisoners burnt and killed the deputy jailer. To control the Violence, Police and Prison Department Personnel opened fire. Ten persons died and 93 other prisoners were injured. To inquire into the incident an inquiry commission headed by retired High Court Judge Justice David Christian was set up. For that also only a retired Judge was appointed.

• Two persons died in the police firing that took place when two communities clashed at Eraiyur Village, Villupuram District on 09.03.2008. An RDO inquiry was ordered over this incident. Only an RDO was appointed in DMK's rule to inquire this matter.

• A clash erupted between two castes over the removal of a controversial wall between their residential areas at Uthapuram Village, Madurai District on 04.11.2008. To quell the clash, police opened fire and one person died.

An inquiry commission headed by retired District Judge Thiru. Thirupathi was set up. In this matter also, a retired District Judge was appointed.

• When an inquiry commission was set up in regard to Thoothukudi police firing incident, the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition stated that it was only an eye-wash.

I have detailed the police firing incidents during DMK's rule. I have given the full list of those who were appointed as inquiry officers then. If this commission is an eye-wash, were all the inquiry commissions appointed during the DMK's rule also only an eye-wash?

At this hour, I think of the people who died and their suffering families with sincere distress. I don't justify it (police firing). The intention of Amma's Government is that a solution should truly be found and Justice meted out. But it is sought to be turned into a political issue. I have narrated in detail the incidents of police firing in their terms of rule; who all had been appointed as Officers of the Commission. I wish to record in this House that on those very lines, Hon'ble Amma's Government also has appointed a unsullied, honest, retired High Court Judge as the head of the inquiry commission.

If the present Government sets up an inquiry commission and if it is blamed as an exercise to hide the truth and protect the culprits and is branded as an eye-wash, such a response can only be taken as an expression of political malice. This is an example to demonstrate that their policy has always been of having one norm of Justice while in Government and another when out of power.

One other question he raised – why did not the Chief Minister visit the affected place? We have started work on restoring normalcy there. Hon'ble Information Minister Thiru. Kadambur Raju who belongs to that District visited the place on the 27th itself. He met and consoled those admitted to hospital for treatment, assessed the situation with the District Collector at the Collectorate and informed us about the prevailing situation. Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Thiru. O.Panneerselvam and other Ministers went to Thoothukudi, met the people being treated in the hospital, consoled them and assured them that all necessary facilities would be provided to them. We have also given the option to them to get treated there itself or at any other place of their choice, including treatment in private hospital, and we have assured that it would be facilitated.

Seventeen workers of Manjolai Thottam, Tirunelveli District drowned in the Tamirabarani when they jumped into the river while fleeing from police lathi-charge on 23.07.1999. I wish to record that the then DMK Chief Minister Thiru. M.Karunanidhi went to Tiruvarur on 25.07.1999 without any remorse over the death of 17 persons two days earlier and participated in the coral jubilee function and felicitation meeting.

This is what Hon'ble former Chief Minister Thiru. M. Karunanidhi spoke about police firing in the Assembly on 12.03.1969. "As for police firing, the policy of 'shoot to kill' is being followed. Shooting is resorted to after exhausting the options of bursting tear-gas shells and lathi-charge. If there is loss of life in such a shooting, police are not responsible for that. If some people die in such a situation, police cannot be held responsible".

We are not saying this. The then DMK Chief Minister said this in the Assembly. While speaking today, Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition Thiru. M.K.Stalin used harsh words. The Speaker expunged those remarks. I wish to know whether he is in agreement with the views expressed in the Assembly (by the then DMK Chief Minister) in 1969, or rejects them.

Former Chief Minister Thiru. M. Karunanidhi had noted in the Assembly on 25.05.1998 thus: "While controlling the riots, firing became inevitable".

The Supreme Court has set certain guidelines on inquiring into events over handling of law and order problems or of police firing resulting in loss of life. Following those guidelines, inquiry commission is set up during the occurrence of such events to find out the cause, the steps to be taken to prevent recurrence of such events later on, the action to be taken against police personnel if they are found to have indulged in excesses and the like, and a report is sought. It is the usual practice to take necessary action on such reports. On the same lines, now an inquiry commission has been set up under retired High Court Judge, Justice Tmt. Aruna Jagadeesan for the Thoothukudi incidents. I wish to state that this Government will take necessary action on the report submitted by this commission.

It is only Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and Hon'ble Amma's Government that have taken all the necessary steps to get the factory closed down at every stage on account of the hazards it posed to the environment and to people's health. So far, the factory was closed down twice during the AIADMK's rule. This will show that only the AIADMK Government is truly interested in the welfare of the people.

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Hon'ble Ministers for Fisheries, Personnel and Administrative Reforms, for Information and Publicity, for Adi Dravidar Welfare, Thoothukudi Member of Parliament and Srivaikundam MLA visited the injured at the Thoothukudi hospital on 28.05.2018, consoled the affected persons and distributed cash relief. From the doctors they learnt about the types of treatment being given to the injured. They also met the people of that area and learnt about their demands.

The Tamil Nadu Government carefully examined the demand for permanent closure of the factory made by the members of the anti-Sterlite Protesters Committee when they met me, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Senior Minister, Chief Secretary and High Officials of the Government at the Secretariat on 28.05.2018. The Government took into consideration the sentiments and demands of the people of Thoothukudi.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma functioned with this 'taraka mantra' in mind: " I am what I am because of the people; I am for the people". As Hon'ble Amma's Government also functions with the sole aim of people's welfare, it has decided, respecting people's sentiments and their views, to close down the Sterlite factory permanently and issued Government orders for that on 28.05.2018 itself. On that authority, the Sterlite factory was closed and sealed in the presence of the District Collector. I wish to inform this House that Hon'ble Amma's Government, in deference to the sentiments of the people of Thoothukudi and accepting their

demand, has permanently closed down the Sterlite factory.

Some Party Leaders and the Leader of the opposition, Respected Thiru. M.K.Stalin said it was all an eye-wash and the order was not valid. It is not so. Here, it has been mentioned clearly. As per Sec.18(1)B of the Prevention and Protection of Water Pollution Act 1974, the Tamil Nadu Government's order will become invalid only if it contravenes any directions given by the Central Pollution Control Board earlier to the factory. But, till date, the central pollution control board has not issued any orders to the Sterlite factory. In this situation, I wish to state that the Government order for the permanent closure of the factory is valid legally. I wish to bring to the attention of the Hon'ble member that the order was issued only after prior consultations with senior lawyers and legal experts.

Hon'ble Leader of the Congress Party said that proper action was not taken. I have given a detailed account with statistics on how the factory was started, all the steps that were taken and so on. Even before her demise, in 2013 itself, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, as Chief Minister, on receipt of the request from people there, issued orders for the closure of the factory. But they operated the factory through an order obtained from the National Green Tribunal. However, Hon'ble Amma's Government brought to fruition Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's desire and found a solution by permanently closing down the factory in deference to the sentiments of the people there and in fulfillment of their demand.

Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition asked, where had you gone all these 99 days. Not 99 days, for 22 years this agitation has been going on. But only today it has come out. It has come to light today because only Amma's Government will find a solution for it. The DMK was ruling the State between 1996 and 2001 and between 2006 and 2011 -- for 10 years. Why did not they close down this factory? People there have filed a case that they have been severely affected by the gas emanating from the factory and the case has been going on. He knows everything. Still the factory was not closed down. Today, they are enacting a drama. To project an image that it was the AIADMK that committed the mistake and they are the ones who are supportive of the closure of the factory; trying to prove their innocence they have walked out of the assembly today. This is a drama. People know the true State of affairs. Not only have they not closed the factory in 10 years of their rule; they have also given room for the expansion of the factory in their rule. During the DMK's rule, in 1996, the Sterlite factory was started, people were affected and a case was going on in Court. While this was so, for the expansion of the factory, for its second unit, land was assigned. People should realize who did good to them and who injured them. As far as Amma's Government is concerned, people's welfare alone is important to it. Full attention is paid to people's welfare.

Hon'ble Speaker,

SIPCOT had given the land for the second unit expansion of the Sterlite factory. I wish to state that orders have been issued cancelling the allocation of that land. The Thoothukudi incident is a regrettable one. It is a distressing incident. I wish to state that a judicial inquiry will be conducted on the incident in a proper manner and suitable action will be initiated against guilty persons whoever they are.

'People's welfare supreme, Sterlite Plant shut for good'

Statement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami on 28.05.2018 *(English Translation).*

The Sterlite Copper Smelting Plant of Vedanta Group has been functioning in Thoothukudi District for the past 22 years.

Following complaints of people that they had suffered eye irritation due to leakage of gas from the plant on 23.03.2013, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma ordered closure of the plant and withdrawal of power supply on 29.03.2013. On that basis, power supply to the plant was cut off and the plant was immediately closed. However, the National Greens Tribunal allowed the plant to resume its operation on 08.08.2013 after the Sterlite management filed a petition in the tribunal.

Opposing the ruling by the Greens Tribunal and demanding immediate closure of the plant, the State Government filed an appeal in the Supreme Court in 2013. The case is still pending in the Supreme Court.

As the license for the plant for operation expired on March 2018, the Plant applied for renewal of the license. The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board rejected the application on 09.04.2018 stating that the plant had not fulfilled the conditions imposed by the Board. Power supply to the Plant was also cut off from 24.05.2018 and water supply was also stopped.

Meanwhile, the Thoothukudi people demanded the permanent closure of the Plant as the plant failed to follow the conditions imposed by the National Green Tribunal and the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. Anti-Sterlite agitators met me, the Deputy Chief Minister, senior Ministers, the Chief Secretary and other high officials at the Secretariat on 28.05.2018 and appealed for the permanent closure of the plant. The Tamil Nadu carefully considered their demand.

The present Government, treading the path laid down by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, who functioned with the lofty ideal of "I am by the people and for the people", works with the sole motto that people's welfare is supreme. To honour the feelings and views of the people the Government decided to permanently close the Sterlite Plant at Thoothukudi and issued the necessary Government order on 28.05.2018.

'Government order on Sterlite closure valid'

Clarification of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** in the Legislative Assembly on 31.05.2018 on a question regarding Sterlite copper smeltering factory *(English Translation)*.

Congress Members were there (Assembly) on that day. We have not given any wrong information. We clearly stated what happened in the past – when the (Sterlite) factory happened to be started, the steps that had been taken then, in whose regime all the permissions were granted and by whom – all these things I explained for over an hour in the Assembly. Congress MLAs were there. No wrong information was given to the House. Only things that had happened were detailed. I don't see any fault in this. This pertains to a private factory. The G.O. was issued after consulting the Government advocates, legal experts and senior Ministers. As per Sec.88 (1) (B) of the Prevention and Protection of Water Pollution Act 1974, if Tamil Nadu Government had issued any order contravening the directions given by the Central Pollution Control Board to the factory earlier, then that order of the State Government would not be legally valid. But, till date, the Central Pollution Control Board has not issued any order to the Sterlite factory. In this situation, the Tamil Nadu Government's order for the permanent closure of the factory is valid as per the above Act. This I had very clearly mentioned.

The factory has been closed down permanently in deference to the sentiments and views of the people of that District and to the many agitations conducted by many political leaders and parties for the same cause. Till now, this factory was not locked and sealed. Now, that has been done.

At this time I wish to record a viewpoint. On that day, I did not say it out as I was determined not to do so. But they have made me to say it out. Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition has been stating that the factory was about to be closed down during their regime but it was the AIADMK Government that had extended the life of the factory and that the AIADMK party was supportive of the owners of the factory. I wish to quote a passage of his reply (to the debate) on May 3, 2010 when he was Industries Minister. He had spoken much. I want to quote the following passage.

"The Dias Tire company has put up a unit there, with an investment of Rs.400 crore. It will start operations. I got an opportunity to visit the factory when I went to Tirunelveli in 2009. Apart from this, industrial complexes have been set up in Nilakottai in Dindigul District, Manamadurai in Sivagangai District and in Thoothukudi and they have started functioning. Next, we are setting up new SIPCOT Industrial Complexes at Thirumangalam in Madurai and at Ottapidaram in Thoothukudi. The Sterlite company in Thoothukudi has undertaken an expansion scheme at a cost of Rs.1,500 crore".

I am not saying this. When he was Industries Minister, he mentions in his reply, the allocation made for the expansion programme.

When he was Industries Minister, he handed over 230 acres of land for the expansion of the factory. That is, for the second unit expansion, he gave 230 acres of land. Did he or did he not give 230 acres of land from SIPCOT company, when he was Industries Minister? If so, who supported the factory?

Hon'ble Speaker, I am only speaking the truth. I am quoting what he has stated. I am not putting forth any opposing view out of my imagination. I have repeated what he stated as Industries Minister, in his reply. Hence, I wish to inform through this House that this Government has brought to light the fact about who acted in support of the Sterlite company.

You cannot cheat the people whatever you may tell them. The Right to Information Act has come into force. The people are already aware of the facts by getting information through the RTI Act. I am telling this House what people already know. Whatever he has spoken comes under the purview of the RTI Act. The Government itself has given that right to the people.

While this is the truth, they convened a meeting yesterday and spoke in order to hide their mistakes and to prove they are innocent. I am not able to understand this. Here the Assembly is in session. Nobody has asked them to go out. They are afraid as the people will come to know the truth if it comes out. Yesterday, I detailed the statements they gave during their rule and the permissions they granted. I have not stated any thing imaginary or added anything of my own.

I did not want to reveal all these things, but you have made me speak out. You have pushed me to stating this because of your speech yesterday. As for as Amma's Government is concerned, I wish to State that it is taking all steps to close down the factory permanently.

People made their representations even in the days of Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi

Thalaivi Amma 's administration- not today. Then – in 2013 – Amma's Government started taking action for closing down the factory. They were operating the factory as they could get some orders in the Court and exploit the legal loopholes. I have already explained these things in this House. Amma's Government is gradually taking steps.

The Pollution Control Board rejected on 09.04.2018 the factory's application for renewal of licence. The District Collector publicized it through newspapers on 14.04.2018 for the information of the people of the District. It was mentioned clearly that the factory should not operate and the Board had rejected the factory's application. A situation had been brought about even then for the factory to idle. Instances of the factory not respecting the Board came to light. Despite the Board's orders, the factory could function – there was such a situation. Electricity Board and Pollution Control Board officials inspected the factory on May 18. On the basis of their reports power was disconnected to the factory. So, I wish to state that Amma's Government has been taking legal steps at every stage for closing down the factory on a permanent basis and has brought about a condition for its closure and the factory has also been locked and sealed. ■

Rs.20 lakh for families of those who died in Thoothukudi firing

Statement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** on 28.05.2018 (*English Translation)*.

I am really pained and depressed to note that 13 people were killed in an unfortunate Police firing during violence in Thoothukudi, when the agitators gheraoed the Collector's office demanding closure of the Sterlite Copper Smelting Plant .

On 22.05.2018, I issued orders granting a solatium of Rs. 10 lakh each to the victims of Police firing. The senior I.A.S. Officers who have been deputed to restore normalcy in Thoothukudi District, after meeting the family members of the victims and those injured, placed a representation to the Government that the solatium to the victims may be increased .

Meanwhile, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on 25.05.2018 also directed the State Government to consider increase in solatium to the victims. The Government also received many representations from various sources for increasing the solatium.

In deference to the wishes of people from various sections of the society, I have issued orders for increasing the solatium to the victims of Police firing to Rs.20 lakh from Rs.10 lakh and to those who suffered serious injuries to Rs. 5 lakh from Rs.3 lakh and to those who had minor injuries to Rs.1.5 lakh from Rs.1 lakh. The solatium will be paid from the Chief Minister's Public Relief Fund. ■

Chief Minister exhorts sericulture farmers to boost silk yarn production to 3,000 tonnes

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at a function held in Salem City on 28.04.2018 to inaugurate an exhibition and a seminar for Mulberry Farmers and Silk Industrial Entrepreneurs, present prizes to the best mulberry farmers, lay the foundation for new schemes, open completed projects and distribute welfare assistance to beneficiaries (*English Translation*).

Paying obeisance to Goddess Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

Respected Hon'ble Minister for Rural Industries Thiru.P. Benjamin, who explained about sericulture in his brief address, Principal Secretary to the Department of Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles and Khadi who spoke giving details of the schemes implemented, District Collector who welcomed the gathering, Director, Department of Sericulture who is to propose a vote of thanks, Thiru. Semmalai, MLA who put forth excellent ideas in this function, Thiru. V. Panneerselvam, Salem MP, Dr. K. Kamaraj, Kallakurichi MP, Thiru. P.R. Sundaram, Namakkal MP, Thiru.G. Venkatachalam, MLA (Salem West), Thiru.A.B. Sakthivel, MLA (Salem South), Thiru.S.Raja, Sankagiri MLA, Thiru. S.Vetrivel, Omalur MLA, Thiru.R.M.Chinnathambi, Athur MLA, Thiru.A. Maruthamuthu, Gangavalli MLA, Tmt. G. Chithra, Yercaud MLA, Thiru. R.Elangovan, Chairman, State Apex Co-operative Bank, Thiru. R.Chinnusamy, President, Milk Producers Co-operative Union,

former MLAs, office bearers of co-operatives, office bearers of silk co-operatives and Department officers, elders and ladies, sericulture farmers, media friends, beneficiaries of welfare assistance – my grateful respects to all of you.

I am happy to participate in this function as it is a farmers function and I too am a farmer. Though I participate in many Government functions, this function is for the working class – the farmers – and hence I am very happy to participate in this function.

Pattukottaiyaar has given a pen-picture of the weaving industry in one of his songs - 'Chinna chinna izhai pinni pinni varum/chithirai kaithari selayadi; namma thennaattil ennaalum kondaadum velaiyadi' (the small threads weave and inter-weave to make an beautiful handloom saree; an occupation always cherished in our southern parts).

Handloom and Textile industry play an important role in Tamil Nadu's economic development; they preserve our tradition and culture and provide the largest number of jobs in rural areas, next only to agriculture. To encourage this industry and to improve the socio-economic conditions of weavers engaged in it, Hon'ble Amma and following her, Amma's Government has taken up many measures.

As sericulture is a farm-related industry, it gives employment opportunities to rural people, particularly women and provides regular income at short intervals to the farmers engaged in this occupation.

Mulberry-based sericulture is taken up in a large way in the Districts of Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Salem, Erode, Coimbatore, Tiruppur, Vellore, Namakkal, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Virudhunagar and Theni in Tamil Nadu. The State produces just 1,900 tonnes of raw silk yarn against its need of 3,000 tonnes. I wish to mention a few of the schemes implemented in Tamil Nadu for the development of sericulture:

- A subsidy of Rs.10,500/- per acre is given for mulberry cultivation.
- A maximum of Rs.52,500/- is given as subsidy to a farmer who grows mulberry in 5 acres.

- A maximum subsidy of Rs.30,000/- is given for installing in one acre of land, drip irrigation structure for mulberry crop.
- A maximum subsidy of Rs.87,500/- is given for setting up silk worm rearing house.
- The Training Centre at Hosur gives sericulture training.
- To set up automatic Silk Reeling and Twisting units, Government gives subsidy from a minimum of Rs.2.80 lakh to a maximum of Rs.1.06 crore.
- To produce quality bivoltine silk (White silk, Ven pattu), twisters are given from Rs.100/- to Rs. 150/- per kg.

In the last three years, the Tamil Nadu Government has given an assistance of Rs.75 crore for the development of the silk industry. Inclusive of the assistance extended by the Central Silk Board, schemes worth Rs.92.20 crore have been implemented for the development of sericulture.

At the National level, Tamil Nadu occupies the third place in the production of raw silk. As modern technology has been introduced in the development of bivoltine silk and welfare assistance is extended to farmers engaged in sericulture, acreage under mulberry cultivation is gradually going up and as of date mulberry is grown in 46,570 acres by 24,427 farmers.

As a result of Tamil Nadu Government's intense efforts to develop silk industry and the hard work and co-operation of sericulture farmers, Tamil Nadu occupies the premier place in the whole of India in the production of bivoltine silk In the total production of bivoltine silk in the Country, Tamil Nadu's contribution is 89 per cent; by harvesting, on an average, 80 kg of cocoons for every 100 layings, Tamil Nadu is in the forefront in cocoon production in the Country.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has instituted awards for the first three best sericulture

farmers who have produced 80 kg and more of cocoons for every cluster of 100 eggs; at the District level, the prize money is Rs.25,000/-, Rs. 20,000/- and Rs. 15,000/- and at the State level, it is Rs.1 lakh, Rs.75,000/- and Rs.50,000/- . Today, I am really happy to have distributed the awards to the best sericulture farmers.

I have released this year's handbook on sericulture for the benefit of farmers and I request them to make use of it well and turn Tamil Nadu into a premier state in the Country in the production of silk fabrics. I cordially request sericulture farmers, entrepreneurs, silk twisters, silk weavers and Department officials to co-ordinate their efforts to achieve this aim.

Pattukottaiyar said through a song: "Otrumaiyodu athanai noolum ozhungaka vandhaal valarum – ithil oru nool arundhal kularum - idhai ottum ezhai kootturavaalae indha ulagin thozhil valam uyarum" ('If all the threads (in a loom) fall in line, there will be growth; snapping of even one thread will bring disorder. (Likewise) industrial prosperity of this world will advance through co-operation among the poor loom weavers').

If this is the state of affairs for a fabric, I wish to make it clear that discipline and unity are essential for everyone to protect a movement well. I am reminded of a story in this regard.

There was enmity between a fox and a dog in a forest and each was waiting for the right time to finish off the other. One day, when the fox was hiding in a bush, it saw the dog pass by in search of food. It changed its voice, in a bid to teach the dog a lesson, and cautioned the dog not to go that way. " Your enemy, with its pack, is hiding there to kill you. Death for you is certain if you go that way," it said.

Hearing this, the dog took to its heels. The fox was happy on seeing this. However, the dog came to know later that it was the fox which had played the trick on it. To humiliate the fox, the dog consulted a bear. The bear counselled: "Friend, it is not good to allow the enmity between you two to grow. The remedy lies in developing the culture of give and take. If you know the art of looking at the enemy as a friend, you will not harbour enmity against anyone. Torturing others is the trait of the fox. Realize this and move with it in a friendly way".

"I will follow your advice but will the fox mend its ways," asked the dog.

The fox emerged from the bush and said: "I will abide by the advice of the bear. I will be friendly with you. If we are united, our enemy, whoever it is, will be afraid of us. Unity is strength, goes the proverb. Because of you, I have understood the greatness of friendship. Hereafter, I am also a friend of you both". From that day, the dog and the fox jointly went for hunting. We have to adopt the moral of this story in our lives.

There are 300 silk manufacturing societies in Tamil Nadu; Salem District alone, accounts for 30. Against a demand of 3,000 metric tonnes of silk yarn for the State, we produce only 1,900 metric tonnes. Through this function, I request the farmers to make good the balance. Amma's Government will provide all basic facilities for achieving this production.

Our ancestors have taught us the culture of wearing silk clothes on auspicious occasions like marriages. The marriage couple wears the clothes you weave. Hence, your labour reaches the marriage dais. This is not a small matter. It is historic. I wish to point out that the fondness Tamils display for silk is immeasurable.

We should not lose precious lives due to road accidents. All should read the road safety awareness guides which have been distributed. These guides contain the road safety rules to be followed. If these rules are followed there will be no accidents. Hon' ble Amma's Government has taken many steps to reduce road accidents. As vehicle production and usage is increasing every year, Hon'ble Amma's Government is making greater allocations for road widening. From 2011, many roads have been widened and made quality roads. This has reduced the number of road accidents. I wish to point out that through upgradation of road junctions and display of billboards to create awareness about road safety, accidents can be reduced.

The travel time between Salem and Chennai will be reduced to 3 hours when the green corridor project between these two cities, announced by the central Government, is implemented. Road expansion received an impetus only after Hon'ble Amma took over the administration. As for Salem District, Amma's Government has sanctioned flyovers and work is on for reducing traffic congestion caused by the heavy vehicle traffic in the bypass roads, for speedy travel and for averting accidents. Amma's Government is taking steps to lay a bypass road for Salem city also. Many roads across the State are being widened and their quality is being upgraded. Amma's Government is also at the task of upgrading many roads into National highways.

Through this function, 9 works which have been completed at a cost of Rs.414.35 lakh, have been inaugurated; foundation has been laid for 24 new works worth Rs.1,440 lakh; a work connected with the Animal Husbandry Department and worth Rs.40.597 lakh has been commissioned; and welfare assistance to the tune of Rs.1,311.821 lakh has been distributed to 2,078 beneficiaries. Totally Rs. 3,206.768 lakh were allotted and scheme works have been completed and welfare assistance distributed.

Farmers in my adjacent garden are engaged in the rearing of silk worm. They tend the worms as we tend a new-born child. It is so important! From the hatching of the egg till the worm becomes an adult, it is given timely feed. Hence, farmers are doing the praiseworthy job of tending the worms as a new-born child for extracting silk thread. Their labour will never go waste. I am happy to participate in a function where such farmers have assembled. Conveying my good wishes for the continuance of your good work, I take leave of you.

Nandri! Vanakkam!

Chief Minister's advice to new appointees of medical posts

'Serve the people and secure their blessings'

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the function for the distribution of appointment orders in the Public Health Department, held at Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai on 26.04.2018 *(English Translation)*.

Paying my obeisance to Goddess Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

I am very happy and proud to meet you all in this function organized for the distribution of appointment orders for 1,008 medical posts like Doctors, Nurses, Pharmacists and Radiologists in the Department of Health.

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, respected Thiru. O. Panneerselvam who has graced this function and given excellent ideas, Hon'ble Minister for Health & Family Welfare, Respected Brother Dr C. Vijayabaskar who has delivered the address, Hon'ble Ministers, Respected Chief Secretary to Government, MPs and MLAs, Tamil Nadu

Government's Special Representative at New Delhi, Board Chairman, former Ministers, former MPs and MLAs, Principal Secretary, Department of Health and Family Welfare, Departmental Heads of the various wings of Health Department, staff, Doctors, Nurses, Pharmacists and Radiologists who have assembled here to receive the appointment orders, newspaper and media friends and all those who have come here, my respects to all of you in the first place.

Our ancestors said: 'A disease free life is wealth aplenty'. Elders used to say: 'You need a surface to draw a painting'. Hence, there is no doubt that a healthy person is the richest person.

Among humans, Doctors deserve respect next only to God. If Tamil Nadu is in the forefront in the field of health and a model to other States, the world knows that the credit should go to the pioneering schemes drafted by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

The 'Vision 2023' project of Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has fixed targets to achieve the health indices on par with developed Countries and to implement them, Hon'ble Amma's Government is executing many schemes in an excellent manner.

Tamil Nadu is the model State in India, not only in providing high class health care but also in creating excellent human resources and infrastructure facilities. It is in the forefront in implementing mother-child care and family welfare schemes; it is also executing many pioneering schemes to prevent diseases. Amma's Government is setting up new Primary Health Centres, strengthening the structures of Government Hospitals and providing linear accelerator, MRI Scan, Cathe labs, CT Scan and other modern medical equipment so that the poor will get uninterrupted high class medical service in Government Hospitals.

I am happy to inform you that Amma's Government is implementing the many schemes started by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma like the Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Assistance scheme, Chief Minister Comprehensive Medical Insurance scheme, Amma baby care kit, Amma Maternity Sanjeevini scheme, Amma full body scan scheme, Amma special full

body scan scheme for women, distribution of free sanitary napkin scheme, prevention, control and treatment of non-infectious disease scheme, breast-milk bank scheme, expansion of infrastructure facilities in high grade hospitals, setting up multi-speciality hospital and such hospitals with accident care centres and emergency '108' ambulance service.

The first of its kind in India, an exclusive recruitment board for the Department of Public Health and Family Welfare –Medical Personnel Recruitment Board – was set up by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in 2012 for filling up vacancies in Government Hospitals then and there so as to provide uninterrupted medical service to the poor and marginalized people. The Board is working excellently. So far, it has selected 23,880 Personnel including Doctors, Specialist Doctors, Nurses and Medical Staff.

Today, appointment orders are to be distributed to 1,008 persons – 242 Assistant Doctors, 337 Nurses, 308 Pharmacists, 90 Radiologists, 21 Taluk Health Statisticians and on compassionate grounds 10 Junior Assistants. Those who are to receive the orders should realize their duties and work for the people of Tamil Nadu, particularly for the rural poor with a sense of dedication. They should take the many health schemes of the Government to the people and work to the satisfaction of the people and for the development of people's health.

There is a chapter in Tirukkural under the head, 'medicine'. All those coming to the Medical Department must read the 10 couplets in the chapter and also abide by those tenets they mention. Even experts in western medicine should feel the presence of the basics of the indigenous Tamil system of medicine, in the system of medicine that they practice.

No one can deny that it is the precautionary steps taken by the Government, quick treatment and the dedicated round-the-clock work of doctors and medical staff that are responsible for retrieving people from many diseases that threatened them in recent times.

I want to narrate a small story to you all who are to join Government service in the Medical Department.

An aged lion in a forest stopped working, taking the food brought by its offspring and resting all the time. As there was no physical exertion, it could not sleep. So, it summoned some animals, told them about its difficulty and asked them to prescribe the correct medicine. Each prescribed its own remedy but none brought sleep to the lion. It became angry with those animals.

A fox that came to know of this, went to the lion and said: "My grandfather is on top of this mountain; he will prescribe the correct medicine for you". Believing the fox, the lion climbed the mountain but there was no grandpa fox. The fox said: "My grandfather has gone to the nearby forest. He will come only tomorrow. So let us come here tomorrow."

The aged lion came down and it slept well that night. The next day the fox came and asked whether the lion had slept well the previous night. The surprised lion asked the fox, "How did you know that I had good sleep." "If you work, you will need rest and sleep will come on its own", the fox replied.

Similarly, you will be applauded as the best doctor if you find out, before starting treatment, the cause of the illness, what remedy the sick need and cure their illness through appropriate treatment. I consider that alone will be your gesture of gratitude to the Government.

The marks you scored while you studied medicine will not be talked about; the respect people show you after you become a doctor will be spoken of. People should bless you wholeheartedly. Such laurels and greetings alone will bless you and members of your family with a long, healthy, happy and contented life.

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and Hon'ble Health Minister who spoke earlier to me, made an interesting reference. In the health sector, if Tamil Nadu is one of the best States, it is due to the dedicated services of doctors. Many Government Hospitals are on par with private hospitals. At the National level, if Tamil Nadu occupies the premier position in organ transplant, it is due to the efficiency of Doctors.

Narayanaswamy (29), a poor labourer belonging to Athur area, Dindigul District, applied to Government for re-fixing of the two hands that he had lost. The Hon'ble Health Minister consulted me on this and suggested the surgery could be taken up. I asked him whether it was feasible. "Certainly, we can do that; our doctors are experts and highly efficient; they will achieve it", he assured me. Now, it is two months since the said patient has gained both his hands through a cadaver transplantation and he is in a position to use both his hands. I am proud to say that Tamil Nadu is the only State in India where through organ transplantation in a Government Hospital, both the hands have been successfully given to a patient. On behalf of you and myself, I convey my hearty congratulations to the medical team which achieved this feat.

Pointing out that Tamil Nadu is, thus, proving to be a milestone in the medical field, I request the new appointees to put in their best and earn a good name for themselves and for the Government and convey my greetings to all, I take leave of you.

Nandri! Vanakkam! ■

Amidst a thousand eye-catching flowers of 122nd Ooty flower show

Chief Minister inaugurates project works for Rs. 1,850 crore Kundah hydel project

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** inaugurating the 122nd Ooty flower show and the Kundah Pumped Hydel Power scheme works, at Udhagamandalam on 18.05.2018 *(English Translation)*.

Bowing before Goddess Hon'ble Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Thiru. R. Doraikkannu who is presiding over the function to inaugurate the 122nd Ooty Flower Show and the Kundha Pumped Hydel Power Scheme works, the opening of the completed works and laying the foundation for new works, being held at the Ooty Botanical Garden, District Collector Tmt. Innocent Divya who delivered the welcome address, Agriculture Production Commissioner and Principal Secretary to Government Thiru. Gagandeep Singh Bedi I.A.S., Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration & Rural Development, Implementation of Special Programme Thiru. S.P.Velumani, Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition and Excise Thiru. P.Thangamani, Hon'ble Minister for Co-operation Respected Sellur K.Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare and Nutritious Noon Meal Programme Respected Dr. Saroja, Rajya Sabha Member Thiru.K.R.Arjunan, Nilgiris Member of Parliament Thiru.C.Gopalakrishnan, Coonoor MLA Thiru. Santhi A.Ramu, Udhagamandalam MLA Thiru. R. Ganesh, Rajya Sabha

Member Thiru.A.K.Selvaraj, Member of Parliament Thiru. Sundaram, Rajya Sabha Member Thiru. Vijayakumar, Members of Legislative Assembly Thiru. Chinnaraj, Thiru. Eswaran, former Minister and President of Tamil Nadu Milk Producers' Federation Thiru. A.Miller, Principal Secretary to Government, Department of Energy Thiru. Vikram Kapur, former Ministers, former MPs and MLAs, former Minister Thiru. Budhi Chandran, former representatives of Local Bodies, Executives of Co-operatives, Tourists, Government Staff, Newspaper and Media friends, respected Elders and Ladies – I pay my respects to all of you in the first place.

Many wonders have come out of the womb of Mother Nature. It is eye-filling to see the sum total of the world's charm and wonder arrayed here in Ooty. Mountain peaks, valleys, hill tops, reservoirs, waterfalls, flower gardens, rivulets, parks, boat house and hydel power stations in this Udhagamandalam soothe the eyes and the mind. The heritage and culture of this area is preserved till date by the natives of this area like Irular, Kurumbar, Baniar, Thodar, Gothar and Kaattu Naicker and by the Badugar tribals.

Struck by the beauty of Ooty mountain in the moon light, it is said, kings in the 11th century used to call this mountain as "Moon Mountain". In later days, it is said, the name got changed into "Neelagiri" – "giri" meaning mountain. Silappadhikaram mentions this mountain as "Neelagiri". We are proud that Nilgiris is India's first biosphere reserve.

In this 122nd flower show, many pleasing exhibits made up of flowers are displayed. A wonderful panaroma has been created with nine decorated arches, made up of 10,000 gerbera flowers and roses, an entrance in the shape of a butterfly made up of orchid flowers, a cartoon doll out of 1,500 orchids and 1,000 carnation flowers, a replica of Mettur dam made up of one lakh carnation flowers and a Micky Mouse figure out of 800 carnation flowers. I convey my appreciation and good wishes to the staff of the Agriculture Department who have designed all these exhibits. They have created an environment very close to Nature. There is none who does not know how to enjoy Nature. Happiness, a necessity to man, comes only from Nature. The place is replete with flowers–fascinating flowers. They have been arranged very beautifully in 25,000 colourful flower pots including those imported

from Holland like tulip and calla lily, as well as siliconia in 5,000 pots in the Glass Villa.

Nilgiris District provides tea, coffee, vegetables, fruits and food crops, not only to Tamil Nadu but also to other countries.

People, usually praise the Nilgiris as the Queen of Hills. I am proud to say that our Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the people's Queen crowned that Queen of Hills (Nilgiris District) with many schemes and felt happy over it. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma added charm to the beauty of Ooty through schemes like the Rose Garden which sports more than 4,000 varieties, decorative lamps, underground sewerage, rest room, Nanjanad Tea Factory, Government Horticulture Farm, restoration of Ooty Lake, a tea garden in Doddabetta and a cultural centre for the Tribals. Following Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the present Government too considers Ooty as its pet child and cares for it with many schemes.

That is why, at the centenary function of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. on 30.12.2017, I inaugurated a water supply development scheme for the Ooty Municipality at a cost of Rs.27.20 crore, and 258 works worth Rs.57.87 crore inclusive of Nanjanad Indco Co-operative Tea factory. Likewise, foundation was laid on the same day for 1,088 works worth Rs.272.36 crore and welfare assistance to the tune of Rs.81.04 crore to 19,079 beneficiaries was distributed. Amma's Government does many works for the Nilgiris District. I wish to point out a few of them.

1. Use of plastic has been banned totally in Nilgiris District and it has been changed into a plastic-free District.

2. The "magnificent Ooty" scheme was started on 03.10.2017 and the whole District is getting cleansed.

3. De-silting and cleansing of Kodappamanthu canal is being carried out with Ooty Lake Restoration Funds.

4. Under the Forest Rights Act, maximum rights are given to tribals only in Tamil Nadu.

5.In areas where Schedule 17 and Janmam tribals reside, 30 works worth Rs.2.04 crore are carried out, as per the Supreme Court decree, through Devarshola Town Panchayat, 38 works worth Rs.4.20 crore through O'Valley Town Panchayat and 7 works worth

Rs.1.76 crore through the Gudalur Panchayat Union.

6. Construction of 340 houses in Nelakottai Panchayat and in Panchayats of O'Valley Town Panchayat and Gudalur Municipality are going on for tribals residing in Janmam lands. Also free power connection is being provided under the 'one light per house' scheme to the habitations of 630 tribals in these areas.

7. Modernization of the Government Botanical garden and Rose garden in Ooty and the Sims park in Coonoor at a cost of Rs.10.30 crore is under way.

8. Funds have been allocated for the extension of strawberry crop in an area of 100 hectares under the National Horticulture Movement in the current year at a cost of Rs.50 lakh and for the production of strawberry through tissue development at a cost of Rs.20 lakh.

9. Steps will be taken, conceding the Nilgiris farmers' request, to set up, under the micro irrigation scheme, sprinkler irrigation equipment in the shape of a small-size butterfly.

10. I have issued orders to create basic facilities such as road, drinking water, street light, houses and residential school to every tribal colony, by integrating the works of the Departments of Revenue, Rural Development and Forest .

11. Eco Tourism has been arranged at Avalanche, Cairnhill and at Longwood Shola in Nilgiris District for people to enjoy the forest, forest biosphere and Nature's exuberance, for safeguarding the environment and to get acquainted with the Forest Department's actions. Through this, local people's livelihood will be safely linked with bio-diversity.

12. In the last year alone, compensation to an extent of Rs.2 crore was distributed under the Prime Minister's Crop Insurance scheme for the main potato crop. I urge Nilgiris District farmers to join this crop insurance scheme this year also and protect themselves from natural calamities.

13. During my last trip here on 30.12.2017, I announced that a subsidy of Rs.2/- per kg of green tea will be given to small growers of tea who are members of Small Tea Growers Co-operative Societies. Orders have now been issued to implement that announcement. I am happy to state that funds too have been allotted for that.

This Nilgiris cannot be considered just as a naturally endowed place of scenic beauty and a hill that helps while away one's time pleasantly. I am proud to say that the Pykara final stage hydel power station, Maravakandy, Moyar and Kundah hydel power stations have a share in turning Tamil Nadu into a power surplus State and one without power cuts.

The foundation for the 150 MW Pykara final stage hydel power station was laid by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in 1994 and it was dedicated to the nation by her in 2005. It is the first high pressured and high altitude hydel power station in the whole of Asia. For setting up this power station, no forest area was encroached upon; no wild animal was affected; nor was the environment affected. That is the greatness of this station.

Before Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma took over the administration in 2011, Tamil Nadu was plunged in darkness on account of power scarcity and power cuts. You, the people of Tamil Nadu would not have forgotten the sufferings you underwent then. Considering people's sufferings as her own, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma geared up talented electrical engineers, got needed approvals for the various long-term power projects and by speedy action turned Tamil Nadu into a brightly lit State. Till date, Tamil Nadu remains a power surplus State.

For Tamil Nadu's overall industrial growth, for the houses to continue to shed lustre and maintain the state as a power surplus State, this Government that follows the footsteps of Hon'ble Amma with one-pointed concentration, executing works like increasing power generation, strengthening power structures, setting up power transmission structures and extending transmission lines and distribution network. I am happy and proud to inaugurate today the 4 x 125 MW Kundah pumped hydel power project works, costing Rs.1,850 crore at Kaattukuppai area, Nanjanadu, Nilgiris District. This project, expected to be completed in 2021-2022, has the capacity to generate 3 million units of electricity per day. Tamil Nadu will get about 1,095 million units electricity additionally per year.

I have laid the foundation for five buildings of the Public Works Department and for 5 scheme works, worth totally Rs.10.85 crore. I am also happy to have opened the newly set up glass house for the Horticulture Department in the Botanical Garden and 6 buildings including that for the office of Integrated Child Development , all worth Rs.3.43 crore.

My earnest request in this function is that people should use electricity sparingly with social responsibility. We should all realize that every unit of electricity saved is important not only for Tamil Nadu but for the Country's overall development.

The 122nd flower show is open till May 22. This annual show attracts more than 2 lakh tourists. This year, flowers are displayed in various shapes in 35,000 pots. Imported flowers of various hues and the locally grown Lilium flowers take pride of place here. Various competitions including one for the best park are to be held and the winners are to be presented 51 rolling cups and 600 prizes. I offer my advance greetings to the winners of these competitions.

Besides the Flower Show, Tamil Nadu Government has made arrangements to hold rally, night market, vegetable exhibition, photo exhibition, cultural programmes, boat race, book exhibition, fruit show, tea and tourism festival and regale the tourists all through the month of May.

We follow Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's way – "I am by the people; I am for the people only". But those who have been sidelined by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, invoke her name and create an illusion that they are all-powerful. Their act will vanish like a mirage. People know which is real and which is a reflection. When I say this, I am reminded of a story.

A professional stone-cutter, given to worshipping God for years together, used to tell people who asked him about it that his prayer was for the welfare of the people. His friends believed him. Wishing to test him, God appeared before him and offered to give him a boon. The stone-cutter revealed his secret desire. "O! God! I should become the most powerful person and rule this Country", he said. God said, "Alright. You will turn into that which you consider powerful," and disappeared.

"The Sun scorches the world and hence it is powerful; I should become that", he thought and the next second he became the sun. He found pleasure in burning all things with his rays. But the sun could not do anything with the clouds. The clouds even deflected the sun's rays! When he thought that clouds are more powerful than the sun, he turned into a cloud. At that time, a powerful wind started to toss the clouds here and there. "The wind is more powerful than the cloud," he thought and he became the wind. He blew as a breeze on those he liked and lashed as a storm those he disliked. But he could not pass through a mountain that stood in his way. The moment he thought that this mountain was the most powerful, he became a mountain. But a stone-cutter was cutting out stones from the mountain with a chisel! That person appeared to him as the strongest man and immediately he became his old self -- a stone cutter! He realized the truth that fanciful thoughts spoiled one's livelihood and went to the mountain as of old and started cutting stones! A person will lose what he has if he harbours excessive desires. Like the stone-cutter in the story, those who say they are working for the people but are idling will go back to their old position.

During Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's rule, Tamil Nadu earned a name at the National level for maintaining law and order. Under Amma's Government also, the R.S.Puram Police Station has been selected as the best in the entire Country and the Anna Nagar Police Station in Chennai has been selected as the 5th best testifying to the fact that Tamil Nadu stands foremost in maintaining law and order as during under Amma's rule.

Similarly, licence for digital telecast has been obtained from the Central Government for the Arasu Cable TV Corporation Ltd., It took several years to get the licence. To realize Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's dream, Hon'ble Amma's Government placed the request and got the licence from the Centre.

A loan assistance of Rs.237 crore has been given for Adi Dravidars and Scheduled Tribes to become self employed by starting industries through THADCO.

Amma's Government has given a crop loan of Rs.5,813.13 crore to 9,84,990 farmers to help them raise the crop in time. Amma's Government functions as the Government that fulfills the needs of farmers. I wish to state that Rs.2,247 crore has been given to the affected farmers during times of drought. This benefitted 9 lakh farmers. Amma's Government also got them a compensation of Rs.3,500 crore, the highest in India, through the crop insurance scheme.

Accepting the demand of the poor and marginalized people, Hon'ble Amma announced that green houses with 40,000 solar panels would be constructed at a cost of Rs. 840 crore. Those houses have now been constructed. Following the completion of 50 years of the renaming as Tamil Nadu, the current year will be celebrated, on behalf of Government, as Tamil Nadu Golden Jubilee year.

During Amma's rule, a revolution was brought about in the field of education by upgrading schools. One hundred and twelve primary schools were upgraded into middle level schools (in this one year 4 schools), 810 middle level schools into high schools (in this year 19 schools) and 402 high schools into higher secondary schools. A total of 76 Government Arts and Science Colleges have been opened – 65 during Amma's rule and 11 in this one year. Amma's Government has created conditions where students from the families of poor, oppressed and depressed classes can go for higher education at low fees. As a result of these measures, student enrollment has increased – at primary level to 99.85 per cent, middle school level to 99.11 per cent, at higher secondary level to 77.64 per cent. In higher education, the percentage has increased to 46.94. As such, Tamil Nadu is in the premier position in the whole Country.

As for the medical sector, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma started as many as 212 primary health centres so that villagers can get treated in their own localities. Likewise, Amma's

Government too has issued orders for the setting up of about 42 primary health centres. Steps have been taken to upgrade the primary health centres. During Amma's rule, 4 new medical colleges were started. After Amma's rule, 2 medical colleges were started in a year, one in Pudukkottai and one in Karur.

As for organ transplant surgery, a labourer of Athur region in Dindigul District who lost both his hands had them restored through cadaver organ transplant surgery. Two months have passed since the surgery and he is doing well. History has been created. There is no precedent in India that through such a surgery in a Government hospital, two hands have been transplanted on to a patient. I am happy to state that Amma's Government has recorded an achievement in the medical field.

Likewise, heart transplant surgery has been performed on 110 persons, kidney transplant on 318 persons, liver transplant on 161 persons, lung transplant on 102 persons, pancreas transplant on 7 persons. All these surgeries have been performed jointly by Government hospitals and private hospitals in Tamil Nadu. Besides, 388 Taluks have hospitals on wheels.

For the third time at the National level, Tamil Nadu bagged the prize for being the premier State in organ donation with the harvesting of 5,933 important organs from 1,056 cadaver donors.

Vacant Government posts are gradually filled up. During Amma's regime, 55,619 posts were filled up through recruitment by the Tamil Nadu Recruitment Board. In this one year, Amma's Government has filled up 9,434 vacancies. In the Police Department, 1,02,432 posts were filled up during Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's rule; Amma's Government has filled up, in this one year, 15,621 vacancies. During Amma's regime, 72,843 teacher's posts were filled up through the Teacher Recruitment Board; 14,711non-teaching posts also were filled up. In this one year after Amma's Government took over the administration, 2,357 post-graduate teachers, 59 graduate teachers, 4,352 laboratory assistants and 187 assistant professors have been appointed to fill up the vacant posts. Similarly, in this one year alone, 6,438 staff including 4,468 doctors have been selected through the Medical Services Recruitment Board.

It is Amma's Government that has given free laptops to students from Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's days till date so that they can learn better. In these six years, Amma's Government has given 36,25,074 laptops and thus enhanced the level of education. No other State in India has done this but in Tamil Nadu Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma did this for imparting a scientific education and turning out skilled and intellectual students.

Through veterinary medical sector, 810 veterinary sub-stations and veterinary hospitals have been upgraded. Amma's Government is equally compassionate towards animals and opened these sub-stations. Twenty new veterinary hospitals have been opened; 110 new sub-stations have been opened. Amma's Government has created conditions for ready treatment to the livestock of farmers.

Under the Marriage Assistance Scheme, cash of Rs.25,000/-, Rs.50,000/- and 8 grams of gold are given. The annual income ceiling for eligibility has been raised to Rs.72,000/- by Amma's Government. Hon'ble Amma raised the assistance under Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity scheme to Rs.12,000/- from Rs. 6,000/- in 2011. Amma's Government too raised this amount to Rs.18,000/- from Rs.12,000/-. From this, Rs.4,000/- is set apart for distribution of Amma mother-child care nutrition kits to pregnant mothers twice – at the 12th and 16th weeks of pregnancy. Amma's Government has introduced the distribution of nutritious kits to ensure delivery of healthy babies. Through this scheme, it is proposed to distribute Rs.4,326.93 crore to 46.61 lakh pregnant women throughout the State.

Amma Maternity Sanjeevi Kit is a scheme for pregnant women. Which Government gives to a newborn child a kit containing 16 articles for its healthy growth? The services of '108' ambulance are also made available for pregnant women to commute to hospitals.

In the 2016 Assembly election manifesto, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced that AIADMK Government, if returned to power, will give two-wheelers to working women at subsidized rates. I am happy to state that Amma's Government has implemented that announcement. So far, 3.34 lakh persons have registered for the scheme. Of the registered persons, one lakh women will be given two wheelers every year and a maximum subsidy of Rs.25,000/- will be given for each scooter. This scheme is not implemented anywhere in India. The two wheelers will be useful for working women to reach office in time and to return home after office hours. Amma's Government is implementing numerous such schemes.

Idaya Deivam Amma was greatly affectionate towards the people of the Nilgiris and by implementing all their requests, she carved out a niche for herself in their hearts. On the ground that Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Government too is affectionate towards the Nilgiris people to the same extent, I wish to state that the requests made by them and their representatives will be implemented. They have requested announcement of some schemes. I wish to mention some of their demands.

This Government will examine the supply of 15 motorized pickup vans for collecting garbage, to as many Village Panchayats for effective implementation of solid waste management. The Panchayats to benefit include Doddabetta, Kagguchi, Ebbanad and Hullathi in Udhagamandalam Panchayat Union; Hubbathala and Thittapalli in Coonoor Panchayat Union; Denad, Konavakkorai, Kunchappanai and Nedugula in Kothagiri Panchayat Union and Cherangode, Masinagudi and Nellakotta in Gudalur Panchayat Union.

Maintenance works on 28 important roads in Udhagai Municipality will be taken up.

Government will examine the construction of a bus-stand and commercial complexes in Devarshola Town Panchayat.

Under the Chief Minister Green House scheme, 125 houses will be constructed for as many tribals living in huts in 5 Village Panchayats – Masinagudi, Mudhumalai, Srimadurai, Nelakottai and Cherangode and 165 houses will be constructed under the Prime

Minister Housing scheme to people in Gudalur Municipality and O'Valley Town Panchayat. As it is a hilly region, the works will be undertaken at additional cost. I wish to state the Government will examine those works and the requests they made.

Another demand made is for replacing the 100-year-old bridge at Theppakadu area in Chukkanallar road, Masinakudi, Udhagai, with a new bridge as the old bridge is very narrow. The Government will examine this also.

All the pipelines for supply of drinking water in Coonoor Municipality will be replaced. To streamline the drinking water supply in Gudalur Municipality, all the pipelines will be replaced.

The daily wage of the temporary staff working in the Botanical Garden and Government Rose Garden of the Horticulture Department will be increased from Rs.250/- to Rs.300/-. I wish to proudly say that this Government was shaped by Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Then, this long-standing Cauvery dispute. In 1986 itself, Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. wrote to the Centre to set up a Tribunal to resolve the dispute. The Centre constituted a Tribunal and it gave its final verdict in 2007 and this was published in the Central Government gazette in 2013. To get our share of water and to establish our rights over Cauvery waters, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma went to the Supreme Court. Today, we expect a favourable verdict from the court. We have reached the final stage after a long struggle of 32 years that saw many agitations by farmers, the general public, political parties and a 4-day fast by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. I wish to state that the Supreme Court has largely accepted Tamil Nadu's contentions. Whatever Puratchi Thalaivi Amma desired for is coming to fruition. She approached the Court for the setting up of a Board to safeguard the supply of our share of water. On the basis of that case, today the Board has been set up; a monitoring committee has also been set up. This Government remains is on that implements everything that Amma had desired. The Supreme Court has stated that its judgment is based on the Tribunal's final verdict. All our thoughts and demands were inspired by Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Our goal is to carry out what Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi thought till her last days. As per her desire, we argued that Cauvery Management Board and Cauvery Water Regulation Committee should be set up as recommended by the Tribunal's verdict. A final shape for that is to be made available today. This is no ordinary matter. The Cauvery is the perennial river of Tamil Nadu. Our farmers depend on it. Issues start when river water from other States flow into our State. A solution is to be found today for the 32-year-old Cauvery dispute. We expect, we believe a favourable judgment – one desired by farmers and the general public – will certainly emerge. Amma's Government will try to implement the aspirations of farmers and the general public. I take leave of you, thanking the District Collector for his help in organizing this 122nd flower show excellently. I also thank the Agriculturists and the Principal Secretary of the Agriculture Department for assisting him and Government officials who worked jointly with him.

Nandri! Vanakkam !

Sewerage and water supply schemes opened

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami inaugurated/ declared open through video conferencing at the Secretariat on 13.03.2018, 12 scheme works of the Department of Municipal Administration and water supply, costing totally Rs.189.81 crore.

The prime duties of local bodies are to provide civic amenities in proportion to the growing population in urban areas, supplying protected water supply and laying drainage facilities. The Tamil Nadu Government that follows in the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is implementing many schemes to encourage the activities of local bodies that discharge essential duties, improve public health care, remove sewage and to meet the drinking water needs of the people.

Under Assembly Rule 110, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced on 16.04.2013 that a sewerage system would be implemented in Nolambur local body that was annexed with Chennai City under the Greater Chennai Development Scheme. Accordingly, the Hon'ble Chief Minister inaugurated on 13.03.2018, the Chennai Metro Water Supply and Drainage Board's schemes of laying an underground sewerage at a cost of Rs.28.35 crore and a water supply scheme at a cost of Rs.18 crore through which 28,000 people will be benefitted.

Other schemes inaugurated/opened are: water supply in Karambakkam, Chennai at a cost of Rs.20.56 crore, underground sewerage in Maduraivoyal, Chennai at a cost of Rs.60.96 crore;

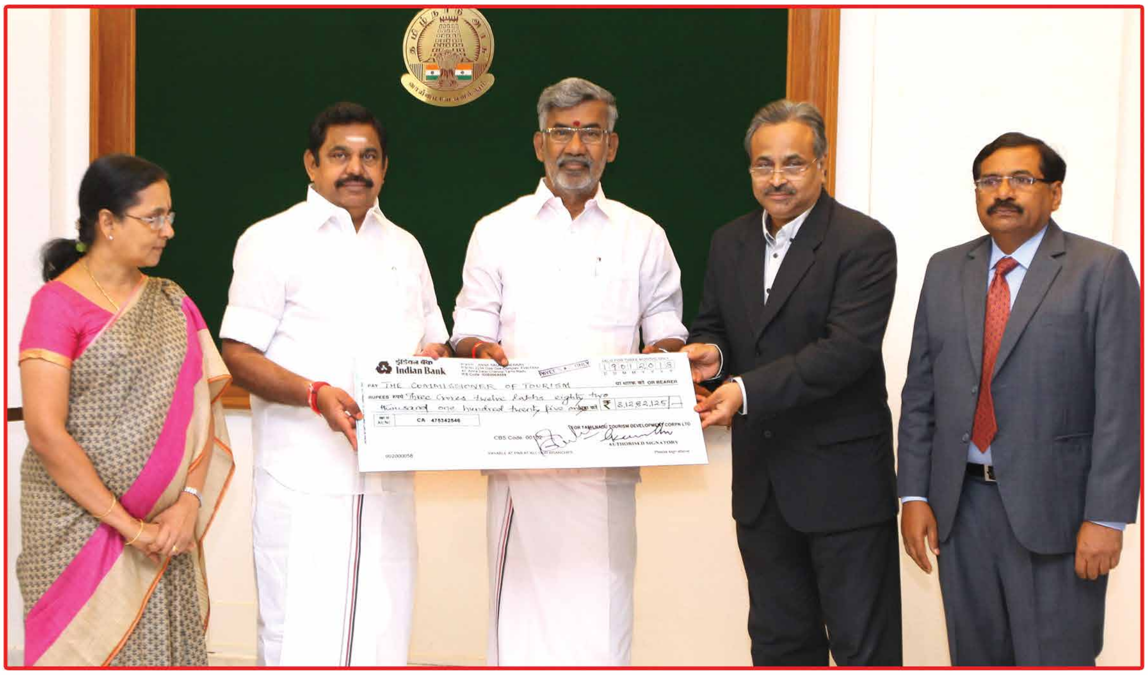
A combined water supply scheme at a cost of Rs.2.65 crore to benefit Athankaraipatti and 14 other rural habitations belonging to Kadamalaigundu and Mayiladumparai Unions, Theni District, an underground sewerage system

in Periakulam Municipality at a cost of Rs. 26.60 crore and a water supply scheme in Cumbum Municipality at a cost of Rs.18.80 crore – all by the Tamil Nadu Water Supply and Drainage Board;

Additional class rooms in the Chennai Girls Higher Secondary School, School road, Nungambakkam in Greater Chennai Corporation at a cost of Rs.2.95 crore, community hall constructed at a cost of Rs.3.65 crore in V.R.Pillai street, Tiruvallikeni, a new park at a cost of Rs.98 lakh at Kalaimagal street, V.G.N.Lakshmi Nagar, Alandur, Urban Primary Health Centre building at a cost of Rs.1.28 crore at Appavu street, Alandur, a new park in the TNHB residential quarters, Sholinganallur at a cost of Rs.2.99 crore and 46 rest rooms for washermen at Bujjammal street, New Washermenpet in the Dr. Radhakrishnan Nagar Assembly Constituency at a cost of Rs.2.04 crore.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also presented appointment orders to 16 persons as a token of appointment on compassionate grounds of 473 heirs of employees who had died while in service. Of the deceased employees, 198 were serving in Chennai Corporation, 214 in Municipalities and 61 in the Chennai Metro Water Supply and Drainage Board. ■

News in Picture



Hon'ble Minister for Tourism Thiru. Vellamandi N. Natarajan presented a cheque for Rs.3,12,82,125/- to the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the Secretariat on 13.04.2018 towards Government share of the dividend declared by Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation for the year 2016-2017 out of its net profit.

Chief Minister connects with his constituents

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** at a function at Samudram in Konganapuram Division in Salem District on 27.03.2018 (*English Translation*).

I bow to Goddess Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Hon'ble Minister for Health and Family Welfare Dr C.Vijayabaskar, who participated in this special function,

The District Collector, who welcomed the gathering, Sankagiri MLA Thiru.Raja, Athur MLA Thiru. Chinnathambi, Omalur MLA Thiru.Vetrivel, Veerapandi MLA Tmt. Manonmani, former President of the

Konganapuram Panchayat Union Thiru.Mani, former District Panchayat Union President Thiru. Rajendran, Co-operative Union President Thiru.Manickam, Government Officials, officials belonging to the Medical Department, Revenue Department, Health & Family Welfare Department, elders, ladies, farmers, and office-bearers of various units of the Party, at the outset I welcome you all to the function.

Villages in and around Samudram, Pudupalayam, Konasamudram, Kovanampatti and Vellapuram are all well known to me. For many years I have been serving as the MLA of this area with your support and the blessings of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma made me the Minister for Highways in the period 2001 to 2016. Through that I got an opportunity to provide good roads attached to the Highways Department in this area. The present Amma Government, which is functioning as per the directions of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has introduced Kudimaramathu scheme and through that scheme alluvial soil removed from the tanks and ponds was distributed to farmers free of cost. In the first phase, 1,519 tanks have been de-silted at a cost of Rs.100 crore. This resulted in recharge of ground water in areas in and around the tanks.

Today, Pudupalayam, Konasamudram, Kovanampatti and Katchupalli villages in and around Samudram are drought-hit areas where groundwater is depleting day by day. Even if you install bore for over 1,000 feet, it is difficult to get water. To improve the groundwater level, the Kudimaramathu scheme has been introduced in the tanks in and around these villages. The scheme would increase the capacity of the tanks thereby the ground-water level. The scheme has the twin benefit of providing drinking water for these villages besides water for irrigation.

In the second phase, the Amma Government had sanctioned Rs.331 crore for deepening the tanks. The Government is also constructing

check dams across ponds, rivers and tanks to store rain water. By conserving rain water, the ground water level would automatically increase thereby helping farmers get sufficient drinking water and water for irrigation. For this, Rs. 1,000 crore will be spent in the next three years. Water management is the most essential thing, because the State is not getting sufficient rain. So it is the duty of the Government to store rain water in a proper manner and recharge ground water.

People in this area wanted a Primary Health Centre here and the Government conceded the demand and opened the new PHC at Samudram. The new PHC will benefit over 20,000 people in and around this area. The aim of starting a new PHC is to enable people in and around this area get easily accessible medical facilities. Only during Amma Government's rule, more and more PHCs are being opened in Tamil Nadu. I would like to point out here that by opening PHCs in rural areas, this Amma's Government has created a situation whereby poor people get the necessary medical facilities. People here said that there is an acre of land behind the PHC and the building for the PHC can be constructed there itself. That demand will also be conceded. I am happy to announce that the Government will spend Rs.1 crore for constructing the building for the PHC.

For farmers, the Government has announced many schemes. Agriculture, powerloom and handloom are the three main occupations of people here. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, when she was in power, provided electricity at subsidized rates to powerloom and handloom units. Nowhere in the Country, except in Tamil Nadu, electricity is supplied at no cost to weavers, workers and owners. Apart from this, 100 units of power are given free to all household connections in the State. Such a scheme is not in vogue even in the neighboring Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra States. The present Amma Government in the State always realizes the requirements of poor people and meets them.

The present Government has conceived many welfare schemes for the people. Only in Tamil Nadu, marriage assistance is provided to women in the State. Under the scheme, Rs.25,000/-, Rs. 50,000/- and one sovereign of gold are given by the Government. Under the maternity scheme, Rs.6,000/- is being given to pregnant women during the DMK regime. This was enhanced to Rs.12,000/- by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, which has now been increased to Rs.18,000/-. The amount is being given in two instalments at the 12th and 16th week of pregnancy. The grant includes the Rs.4,000/- worth Amma baby care kit containing 16 materials.

There are reports that though children are born normal, they are found to be under-weight. To address this underweight problem, the Government is giving the Amma mother-baby care kit containing 16 materials since April 1 this year. Only if the babies are born

healthy they can survive without any disease. The scheme is available only in Tamil Nadu. Only during the present Amma regime, many beneficial schemes are being implemented for the people. For farmers, the Government has implemented welfare schemes including issue of crop loans.

In the 1989 Assembly election, you made me an MLA, when I contested under the cock symbol. Then I became an MLA in 1991. After that l became an MP. In 2011, I was again made MLA and during that period, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma included me in the Cabinet and gave me the Highways portfolio. As I functioned efficiently, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma gave me the PWD portfolio also in 2014.

After the demise of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, with the support of people, party workers and MLAs, I was made the Chief Minister. I have successfully completed one year of office and I am entering the second year of rule. The distinction of making the MLA of Edappadi the Chief Minister goes to the people of the constituency. There are 234 Assembly Constituencies. Of these, Edappadi gets prominence because it has given the Chief Minister for the State. The State Government will take personal care in providing necessary assistance to the poor, downtrodden and marginalized people of the constituency.

When I was an MLA, I was able to visit the constituency frequently. After becoming the Minister I could visit the constituency once in two or three months to participate in some function. Now, being the Chief Minister, I am not able to tour the constituency frequently. That is my regret and only regret.

As Chief Minister, I have to attend various official duties daily and plan schemes for the entire State. As I am busy with official work, I could not visit the constituency frequently. But all your petitions are loaded in the computer through which I am aware of your problems. I used to get in touch with party office-bearers and conceive schemes for the benefit of the people.

You demanded a PHC during election time and the PHC has been opened now. In a similar manner, I shall meet all your demands one by one. I want you to support the Amma Government. I am always with you. The post of Chief Minister is not permanent. That post was given to me by you. I know many people personally in the constituency. As I have been MLA for many years, I know the problems of the villages here. I shall find solutions to all those problems. Now the petitions given by you are all registered in the computer and they will be looked into. I am confident of your support to the present Government, which is making the dreams of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma come true.

I thank all those who gave me a rousing reception and an opportunity to participate in the function along with you all.

Nandri! Vanakkam!

Buildings, interlinked digital library boost higher education infrastructure

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open through video conferencing at the Secretariat on 05.04.2018, the Rs. 8 crore administrative and educational buildings of the Madurai Kamaraj University constituent college of arts and science at Kottur, Theni District. In addition, buildings of the Department of Higher Education, constructed at a cost of Rs.18 crore at Chennai, Tiruvarur, Erode, Tirunelveli and Kanniyakumari Districts were declared open and a website –Tamil Nadu Digital Library Website – created at a cost of Rs.1.86 crore was inaugurated.

In the last 7 years, the Tamil Nadu Government that treads the path of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has started 76 new Government Colleges and improved the infrastructure facilities of Government Colleges to obviate difficulties for rural students to go to cities for their higher education, to give them a lift in life by imparting higher education and make Tamil Nadu into an excellent State in Science and Technology. This has boosted the enrollment percentage of students to 46.9 and made Tamil Nadu the foremost State in India in this regard.

Other buildings declared open were: the entrance arch at the Presidency College, Chennai at a cost of Rs.40 lakh, administrative and educational buildings at a cost of Rs.7.25 crore for the Bharathidasan University

constituent college of arts and science at Tiruthuraipoondi, similar buildings at a cost of Rs.7.25 crore for the Government Arts and Science College at Satyamangalam, Erode District, residential building at a cost of Rs.75 lakh for the Vice-Chancellor, one for the Registrar at a cost of Rs.60 lakh and a building for the Gnanavani radio station at a cost of Rs.75 lakh in Manonmaniam Sundaranar University at Abishekapatti, Tirunelveli District and a hostel at a cosst Rs.1 crore for the Government Polytechnic College at Nagercoil, Kanniyakumari District total cost of Rs.26 crore.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, announced in the Assembly on 01.08.2014 under Rule 110 that a digital library was planned to be set up at Anna University and Tamil Nadu Open University by Net-linking library-connected information of 13 Universities, these available with them and their text book contents. This will facilitate students and teachers to download e-books, periodicals, videographs and the these of all Universities. All the Universities and their affiliate Colleges would be linked with this digital library, she said.

Accordingly, the website – www.tndigitallibrary.ac.in – set up at a cost of Rs.1.86 crore was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister.

As this portal links the libraries of 13 Universities and the Colleges affiliated to them, urban and rural students as also researchers and college professors can browse e-books and easily share the intellectual treasures at the global level. ■

Rs. 16.75 crore staying facility inaugurated at Thaiyur village for construction workers

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open through video conferencing at the Secretariat on 05.04.2018 a resting hall at Thaiyur 'B' village in Kancheepuram District that can accommodate 1,000 construction workers. The hall has been constructed at a cost of Rs.16.75 crore. He also declared open an integrated Labour Office complex with legal metrology laboratory at Kulavanigarpuramin Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli District. The complex has been created at a cost of Rs.3.84 crore.

In her statement made under Rule 110 in the Legislative Assembly on 12.08.2014, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma said that employers who engaged workers in construction work should provide temporary accommodation to them near their place of work. But the places of stay made available to them were found to be insecure. Small construction companies did not at all provide this facility. To remove these difficulties, buildings would be constructed at nine places for the accommodation of 7,000 workers, she said.

By way of implementing this announcement of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the resting hall has been constructed which the Hon'ble Chief Minister declared open through video conferencing. The hall has in-built facilities that include drinking water, washing of clothes, safety centres for children and old- age people, banking service, reading room, health and recreation centres.

The opening of the Integrated Labour Office complex with legal metrology lab will benefit countless workers, employers and traders.

Chief Minister releases textbooks based on new syllabus

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami released new textbooks, based on revamped syllabus for Standard 1, 6, 9 and 11, for all subjects and language subjects covering 147 titles at the Secretariat in Chennai on 04.05.2018.

These books have been prepared by the State Council for Educational Research and Training and printed by the Tamil Nadu Textbooks and Educational Services Corporation.

In the context of release of National Curriculum Framework 2005, and in view of the fact that the syllabus in Tamil Nadu for Standards 1 to 10 was prepared 7 years ago and that of the higher secondary subjects was prepared 12 years ago, the Tamil Nadu Government decided to revamp the syllabus and constituted a committee for the purpose.

Based on the recommendations of the committee, and considering the educational standard of students, the Tamil Nadu Government, treading the path of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, prepared new textbooks for classes 1, 6, 9 and 11 based on the revamped syllabus.

The new books have been prepared by the best educationists and teachers in the State, with the aim being to improve the personality development, creative skills, practical skills and thinking capacity of the students. They will also to prepare students to face challenges confidently in the educational and employment field in tune with the technological changes that are taking place at the International level.

The new textbooks, apart from being well structured and having appropriate illustrations and information, also give opportunities for using information technology to enable students improve their knowledge. The new books will definitely prepare students of Tamil Nadu a good future.

Physics lab, hall for Annadanam opened

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami declared open at the Secretariat on 05.04.2018 a physics laboratory and a library of the Sridevi Kumari Women's College at Kuzhithurai, Kanniyakumari District, constructed at a cost of Rs. 95 lakh and an Annadanam Hall, constructed at a cost of Rs.55 lakh at Arulmigu Ananda Vinayakar temple at Mannargudi in Tiruvarur District.

Temples are the repositories of Tamil culture, the substratum of spirituality and the standing testimony of artistic talents. The Tamil Nadu Government that follows the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is keen to implement, through its Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Department, works like protecting and maintaining the properties of temples, ensuring un-hindered daily poojas in them and providing necessary facilities to devotees.

The Sridevi Kumari Women's College has a student strength of 1,031. The physics lab has come up on a area of 10,000 sq. ft . The Annadhanam hall is constructed in an area of 2,127 sq. ft and can accommodate 90 devotees. The total cost of the buildings inclusive of the library is Rs.1.5 crore.

‘Amma’s Government follows Amma in developing Namakkal as industrialized District’

Speech of the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami,** at a Government function in Pallipalayam in Namakkal District on 26.03.2018 *(English Translation).*

I bow before the Goddess Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Hon’ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition & Excise, Thiru. P.Thangamani, who is presiding over the function in which a new railway over-bridge between Pallipalayam and SPP Colony and a new Police Station at Veppadai are to be declared open and foundation stone is to be laid for a bridge at Cauvery R.S. and for two over-bridges in Cuddalore and Villupuram District, Hon’ble Minister for School Education, Thiru. K.A.Sengottaiyan, who is participating as a special guest in this function, Hon’ble Minister for Social Welfare & Nutritious Noon Meal Programme Dr. V. Saroja, Hon’ble Minister for Environment Thiru. K.C.Karuppanan, Hon’ble Minister for Transport, Thiru. M.R. Vijayabhaskar, the District Collector who welcomed the gathering, Namakkal MP Thiru. P.R.Sundaram, Namakkal MLA Thiru. K.P.P.Bhaskar, Senthamangalam MLA Thiru. C. Chandrasekaran, former Minister and MLA of Tiruchengodu, sister Pon.Saraswathi, former Minister Thiru. K.V.Ramalingam, Thiru. K.S.Thennarasu, MLA and officials from the Southern Railway divisional office, high Government Officials, Party office-bearers, ladies and gentlemen, former local body representatives, members of the co-operative bodies and Chief Engineer of the Highways Department, at the outset I welcome you all.

Today, we see Namakkal District as a fully developed District. My earlier speakers, Hon'ble Electricity Minister Thiru. Thangamani and the Hon'ble Social Welfare Minister, Dr.Saroja listed various projects that are being executed in the District.

You must ponder how the District was during the previous DMK and how the District developed after Puratchi Thalaivi Amma came to power in 2011. Only if you judge the performance of both the Governments like in a balance you can realize the good work done by this Government.

During Puratchi Thalaivi's rule, Namakkal District was developed as an industrialized District. To develop the District further by improving the infrastructure, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma conceived many projects. Those projects have become a reality now and were listed by Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition & Excise, Hon'ble Minister for Social Welfare & Nutritious Noon Meal Programme Party MPs and MLAs. Some of the projects are being inaugurated at this function and dedicated to the people for their use.

As earlier mentioned by Hon'ble Minister Thiru. Thangamani, Namakkal is the only District in the State which is having four-lane roads in all places with Tiruchengodu as the centre point. Today, we have laid a four-lane road from Tiruchengodu to Erode. The work on four-way lane from Tiruchengodu to Paramathi has already been completed and is to be inaugurated. By utilizing State funds, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had given four-lane road from Tiruchengodu to Namakkal. Similarly, roads are being expanded between Tiruchengodu to Rasipuram and to Mallikarai. Work will begin soon for four-way lane roads from Tiruchengodu to Sankagiri, Sankagiri to Konganapuram, Taramangalam and Omalur. All roads branching from Tiruchengodu have been expanded. Namakkal is the only District among the 32 Districts in the State that has got this distinction.

Now land acquisition work is going on for a by-pass road to Tiruchengodu. Regarding Namakkal and Rasipuram by-pass road, the first phase has already been completed and the second phase is going on in full swing. After completion of these infrastructure works, there will be free movement of vehicular traffic in the District. I would like to point out that this Amma Government has provided this facility to the people of the District.

There are two canals in the District namely East Bank Canal and West Bank Canal. Through these two canals water is being supplied for farming operations in the District. To prevent leakage of water and to ensure adequate water for farmers in the tail-end areas like Pallipalayam when water is released in the canal, side walls and the bed of the canals are to be concretized.

A sum of Rs.48 crore was sanctioned 15 days ago for the project and tender for the work is to be floated soon. Similarly, concretizing the Mettur East bank Canal is to be done shortly. Once these works are completed, there will be no seepage of water in both the canals and farmers in the tail-end areas will get sufficient water for their agricultural operations.

This District is known for handloom and power-loom units. Uninterrupted power supply is most essential for these industries and they cannot function without power. Knowing the importance of power, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma sanctioned free power to these industries.

While water is essential for farming operations, electricity is necessary for industries. Industries in the District will be crippled if there is no power. During the previous DMK regime, nobody could predict the availability of power. There were severe power cuts between 2006 and 2011.

During the election campaign people complained to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma about the erratic power supply in the District. After coming to power, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma assured in the Assembly that she would make Tamil Nadu a power surplus State within three years. Subsequently, Amma conducted periodic meetings with the EB officials and succeeded in meeting the challenge. Within three years, Puratchi Thalaivi Amma freed the State from power cuts. Today, the local MLA and the Hon'ble Minister for Electricity, Prohibition & Excise, Thiru. Thangamani has been taking measures to improve the power production in the State so that there are no power cuts in the State in future. Recently, we laid the foundation stone for Udangudi Power station. By providing uninterrupted power supply more industries will come up in the State, thereby improving industrial development. Industrial development will automatically lead to economic upliftment of people. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, with a foresight planned many schemes for the welfare of the State and the present Government, which is following the path laid down by Amma, is implementing those schemes.

Hon'ble Amma's Government has planned a road overbridge in Ariyanur junction between Salem and Tiruchengodu, following reports that accidents occur frequently at this junction. I am happy to inform you that in another two months, the road overbridge work will start at Ariyanur junction. There is heavy traffic at Ariyanur between Tiruchengodu and Salem via Attayampatti where the National Highways joins. The heavy traffic at Ariyanur junction is responsible for frequent accidents. To prevent the accidents, a road overbridge

will be constructed. Your Hon'ble Minister demanded another road overbridge at Athanur branch road on the Sankagiri- Kumarapalayam National Highway. I am happy to inform that the Government will take steps to construct a road overbridge at that junction also.

There is also a demand for a road overbridge near Kongu Kalyanamandapam on the National Highway road from Chennai on the branch road to Kumarapalayam. The Government will take steps for constructing the overbridge. Similarly, there is demand for a railway overbridge at Athanur. For constructing a railway overbridge, the Railway administration has a fixed norm. It will conduct a survey to count the number of vehicles that wait on both sides of the railway line when the railway gate is closed for rail traffic. Only if it is more than one lakh railway vehicle units, the Central Government will sanction a railway overbridge. The survey will soon be taken up and if the number of railway vehicle units is more than one lakh then the railway overbridge will be constructed by the State Government after getting the necessary sanction from the Central Government.

This Amma Government is implementing a number of schemes for the benefit of the people. For farmers to get water for farming operations, this Amma Government is taking legal steps. Unlike the previous DMK Government, the present Government does not shirk its responsibility. Recently, the DMK organized a conference at Perundurai. At the conference, the Opposition leader is reported to have said that he would send the present Government home in no time. His only intention is to dismiss the present Government. Right from the day we took charge he has been saying this. He does not want to do any good thing for the people. His intention was to remove the present Government. When we took over power, he said that the Government would not last till the budget session. We successfully presented the budget. Then during the demand session for various Departments, he said the Government would not last till the demand session. That session was also over. Then, he said that the Government would not last three months. But the Government completed one year rule successfully and is entering into the second year.

It is not possible to topple the Government easily as the present Government has the blessings of both the Puratchi Thalaivar Ponmana Chemmal M.G.R. and Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. These two divine leaders are protecting the Government. As long as their blessings are with us no one can topple us. Even if all opposition parties join together they will not succeed in toppling the Government. Whatever the tribulations, we will overcome them successfully with the support of the people. Because we have been implementing welfare schemes for the benefit of the people they are supporting us. We have not failed in our attempts to do good for the people.

The State has won the Krishi Karman Award for the year 2015-2016 for the highest productivity in foodgrains production. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture received the Award from the Hon'ble Prime Minister at New Delhi last week. Be it in agriculture or in any other field, Tamil Nadu is marching ahead.

The present Government belongs to you and it is a Government for the poor. We know the requirements of the people as we move closely with the people. We know how to find solutions to the people's problems. We did not become Ministers through influence. We worked hard and came to this position due to

sincere and dedicated service. You can succeed through sincerity and hard work. As far as this Government is concerned, it is a Government which works for the people. We conceive schemes which are beneficial to the people and implement them. We monitor the schemes to see whether the benefits of the scheme are reaching the people.

I thank all those who participated in this function where an overbridge and Police Station were declared open and a foundation stone was laid for a lower-level bridge. I am happy to see that people from all over the constituency assembled at the function venue. The crowd that has gathered here looks like a sea of humanity. People of the constituency will get more welfare schemes from the Hon'ble Amma's Government and I am confident that they will continue to stand by the Government. With this, I thank you all for giving me this opportunity.

Nandri! Vanakkam!

Chief Minister honours team of students who won second prize in Kala Utsav

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami honoured at the Secretariat on 04.05.2018, eight students from the State who, as a team, got the second prize in the music division of the Kala Utsav 2017 competitions, with a shield and a cheque for Rs.5,000/- each for their feat. The students called on the Hon'ble Chief Minister to show the prize they won –a silver trophy, a silver medal and Rs.75,000/- cash- and seek his blessings.

The Kala Utsav scheme was launched to introduce students to India's traditional arts, improve their skills in those arts and to retrieve these arts and rejuvenate them. The Kala Utsav 2017 competitions were conducted in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh between 03.01.2018 and 06.01.2018, focusing on the theme 'One Bharat; Magnificent Bharat'. For participation in this competition, District and State-level competitions were held for students of 9th to 12th standards in dance, music, drama and visual arts and crafts in September and October last year. Totally 6,477 students participated. In each team, a differently-abled person also participated. From among the winners in the state-level competition, 30 students – boys and girls – were selected for the national- level competition.

At the national competitions, 144 teams participated – from schools in 34 States, Central Government schools and Navodaya schools. The Tamil Nadu team that won the second prize in the music competition comprised R. Aruna, R. Akila, P. Muthukumar, N. Vishnuvardhan, S.Balachander, K. Balakumar, P. Bharathi and M.Guhan.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister congratulated the students, blessed them and gave them a shield and Rs.5,000/- cheque each.

Edappadi town has witnessed substantial progress due to schemes: Chief Minister

Speech delivered by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami,** in a Government function at Edappadi in Salem District on 27.04.2018 *(English Translation).*

I bow before Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Respected District Collector, who presided over the function and gave the presidential address, former Minister and respected Mettur MLA Thiru. Semmalai, respectful MP and my brother Thiru. Panneerselvam, respected Sankagiri MLA Thiru. G.Venkatachalam, former Municipal Chairman Thiru. Kathiresan, former Deputy Chairman, Thiru. Ram, former Chairman of the Konganapuram Panchayat Union Thiru. Mani, District Milk Producers Co-operative Society Chairman, Thiru. Chinnasami, high Government officials, party office-bearers, ladies, friends from print and visual media, at the outset I welcome you all for the function.

This function has been arranged in connection with the inauguration of completed schemes, which were earlier initiated by Hon'ble

Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, for laying foundation stones for new schemes, which were announced earlier, and for the successful implementation of various schemes, which were announced by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

"Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced many schemes for the Edappadi Constituency during her rule and those schemes are being implemented step by step. During 2011 Assembly elections, you submitted a demand for protected drinking water supply in 30 wards of the town. When I placed your demand before the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, she immediately issued orders sanctioning Rs.17.36 crore. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma laid the foundation stone for the protected water scheme. The scheme was speedily completed and was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Now, I am happy to announce that the residents of Edappadi are getting protected drinking water from the river Cauvery.

Idhaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma conceded the demands that were handed over to her. There was a demand for expansion of the roundtana to Edappadi as the road leading to the town is narrow making it difficult for heavy vehicles to cross the road. But the expansion of the roundtana is difficult as it involves removal of many big buildings. To avoid this and to facilitate free movement of heavy vehicles into the town, Hon'ble Amma sanctioned a by-pass road. The first phase of the project has already been completed and thrown open to traffic. The second phase of the work will be completed soon. Similarly, we demanded hospital and it has been completed at a cost of Rs.4 crore. Your demand for a bridge between Jalakandapuram and Vellandi Valasu has been sanctioned by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. The new bridge has been put into operation. A college, where the poor and marginalized students of this area can pursue their higher education at a nominal fee has been provided. Today, 1,205 students are studying in the college. Now, you demanded some new courses for higher education in the college. Steps are being taken by Hon'ble Amma's Government to sanction

those courses from the current academic year. A Divisional Office for Highways will be opened shortly in this area as demanded by you.

As far as the Electricity Department is concerned, the Divisional Office for Edappadi is now functioning in Mettur. People here complained that they had to go to Mettur for issues relating to electricity and if a Divisional Office is opened in Edappadi it will be helpful to them. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma sanctioned divisional office for Edappadi and building works are going on. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma conceded all your demands. Your demand for a shopping complex in this area has been cleared by Amma immediately. The foundation stone for the complex is to be laid soon. People of Edappadi Municipality demanded a park. As funds for setting up the park have been sanctioned during Amma period, steps for establishing the park will be taken up soon. Your demand for expansion of roads in Edappadi and a foolproof drainage system has been conceded by Amma and the roads in Edappadi are now free from congestion.

Similarly the demand for renovation of Nandikeshwar Temple has been conceded by Amma. Amma sanctioned funds for constructing a Marriage hall near the bus stand and soon the foundation will be laid for the marriage hall. I am duty bound to say that the Amma Government has been conceding all your demands.

SCHEMES TO BE INAUGURATED TODAY:

Development works for the weekly shandy at a cost of Rs. 2.50 crore under IGFF 2014-2015 scheme (golden jubilee year scheme) have been completed and the same is to be opened today.

Sixteen tenements for scavengers at a cost of Rs.1 crore under the IGFF 2014-2015 scheme (golden jubilee year scheme) have been constructed and the tenements are to be opened today.

Eighteen shops have been constructed as part of development works at the bus stand at a cost of Rs.1.30 crore under the IGFF 2014-2015 scheme (golden jubilee year scheme) and the shops under the project are to be opened today.

Under phase II of the TURIP-2016-2017, tar roads to a length of 4.393 km and cement road to a length of 1.100 km have been laid at a cost of Rs. 2.5 crore and the newly laid roads are to be thrown open for traffic today.

FOUNDATION STONE TO BE LAID TODAY:

Foundation stone is to be laid today for a shopping complex at the bus stand at cost of Rs.2.90 crore, under the TUFIDCO loan 2014-2015 (golden jubilee year scheme).

Under the integrated solid waste management scheme 2017-2018, in Edappadi Municipality 5 MCCs (micro bio-fertilizer centres) will be set up at a cost of Rs. 3.18 crore. Foundation stone is to be laid for these centres. Under the scheme solid waste from all over the Municipality will be segregated at regular intervals for keeping the city. The segregated bio-degradable waste will be converted into fertilizer.

PROJECT WORKS TO BE STARTED SOON:

A new building at a cost of Rs.5 crore for the

Edappadi Municipality at Vellandi Valasu has been completed. This project was announced as a part of the budget announcement 2017-2018.

Tender documents are to be called for provision of piped water supply to all houses in Edappadi Municipality at a cost of Rs.1.45 crore under the CGF/O&M Gap Filling Fund.

PROJECTS TO BE UNDERTAKEN THROUGH SLUM CLEARANCE BOARD:

Under the 'Houses for all scheme', in Edappadi Municipality, 2,117 houses are to be constructed for the poor and marginalized people through the Slum Clearance Board, at a cost of Rs. 44.45 crore, with a unit cost of Rs.2.10 lakh.

Through the above schemes, 54,823 people are to be benefited.

I am happy to inform you that all these schemes are being implemented by Hon'ble Amma's Government. Through this function, six new completed schemes costing Rs.7.44 crore are to be inaugurated and foundation stones are to be laid for 6 projects, which are to be executed at a cost of Rs. 9.77 crore. I would like to point out that through this function, new projects are to be inaugurated, foundation is to be laid for projects, and welfare assistances are to be distributed, all costing Rs. 26 crore.

You should imagine how the condition of Edappadi town was before 2011 and how it looks now after Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma took over power in 2011. The town has witnessed substantial progress after Puratchi Thalaivi Amma came to power. You demanded a bridge to connect Kavundampalayam to Government Hospital and Government Higher Secondary School. The Amma Government has taken steps to construct the bridge at a cost of Rs.1.90 crore. All your demands have been conceded by the Amma Government.

At this juncture, I would like to point out that in addition to these works, inner roads, and cross-roads in 30 wards in the town are being upgraded. Edappadi town was once a backward area. To make Edappadi a developed town, I initiated various schemes and implemented them. Steps are being taken to upgrade the Primary Health Centre in Chittur as Upgraded PHC with 30-bed strength to provide medical assistance to people in that area. For this work, the Government allotted Rs. 1 crore. Similarly, the PHC in Nangavalli has been converted into an upgraded PHC with 30-bed strength and the Amma Government for this project sanctioned Rs. 1 crore. The PHC in Konganapuram Union has also been upgraded. Similarly Model School was opened only during the Amma Government. In Muniampatti of Vellalapuram in Konganapuram Union and in Nandavalli, Chettimankurichi in Edappadi, hospitals have been upgraded with additional facilities. The standard of schools has been upgraded. The high school at Gangavalli has been upgraded as higher secondary school. A separate girls higher secondary school has been opened in Konganapuram, which was earlier functioning as a co-education school. A high school has been sanctioned for Konasamudram. A veterinary clinic has been opened in Pakkanadu for better maintenance of animals in that area.

The Amma Government has constructed a godown for storing harvested produce by the farmers. The farmers can utilize the godown for storing the produce and get cheap loan when the price of harvested produce is not remunerative. They can sell the produce and make profit when they get a lucrative price. The godown has been constructed at a cost of Rs.2 crore. Similarly, a building has been constructed for the Agriculture Department. The Central Co-operative Bank has opened its

branch in Edappadi today. We have opened more fair price shops and constructed buildings for fair price shops. Shades have been provided in bus stops and many roads have been upgraded.

I am happy to inform that an integrated Mecheri-Nangavalli drinking water scheme costing Rs.158 crore is to be completed in one month. After that Mecheri and Nangavalli will get protected water supply from Cauvery. Protected drinking water supply has been provided for the people of Edappadi, Konganapuram and Magudanchavadi during the Amma regime and it was Amma who inaugurated the drinking water scheme. All these schemes have been executed between 2011 and 2018 and all roads in the constituency have been upgraded.

There was a demand for cleaning a lake near Jalagandapuram, where dye wastes are being let into it. The Government is taking steps to treat the dye wastes and the work is going on in full swing. There has been heavy leakage of water in the East Bank canal and there were representations for concretising the banks to prevent the leakage. Funds are allotted to cement the sides of the canal to prevent seepage. We have brought many projects to Salem District. We have constructed bridges, implemented underground drainage system, and provided combined drinking water supply scheme. All these projects are implemented during this Puratchi Thalaivi Amma Government's period. But still, opposition parties in the State are alleging that nothing has been done by this Government. I ask the opposition party leaders to come to the District and see for themselves various schemes that are executed by the Government.

I would like to point out that the All-India Anna DMK Government is the only Government that is meeting the demands of the people. The demands from the people are duly processed and immediate action is taken on the petitions.

The Government is giving house site pattas and old-age pension for the poor and marginalized people. Patta transfer was once a cumbersome process. Now it has been made easy. Earlier, after registering the document, for transfer of patta, one would have to go to the respective Taluk office and give the registration details to get the patta. The procedure has been changed. Now it is enough if one mentions the name of the Taluk at the time of registering the document. The patta is sent directly to the respective Taluk Offices from the Sub-Registrar's Office. Now nobody has to scout around to get patta. At the time of registration itself, the patta is transferred to the Taluk Office concerned from where one can get the patta. If it is a joint patta, it will be measured, corrected and issued as single patta, which will take one month.

In a year, over 7 lakh registrations are being done in the State. It means 7 lakh people have to go to the Taluk Offices for patta transfer. Now the situation has changed. Similarly if you have applied for the patta transfer, it is done through Amma camp held in Taluks at regular intervals.

Similarly, a revolution has been brought about in the Education Department. Only in Tamil Nadu, the number of students enrolled in higher education has increased. At present the percentage of students studying in higher

education is 46, which is the highest in the Country. Through distribution of laptops and provision of monetary assistance to poor students, the State was able to achieve the record enrollment in higher education.

In agriculture, the State has witnessed severe drought, the worst in the last 142 years. But despite drought, the Government monitored the price situation and kept the prices of essential commodities in check. The Government allotted sufficient funds for provision of drinking water to prevent any possible drinking water shortage. To store rain water during drought, Rs.100 crore has been allotted in the first phase to deepen the tanks and lakes under the Kudimaramathu scheme. In the first phase 1,519 lakes have been deepened. The Government has taken up another 1,600 lakes for deepening work and for that Rs. 331 crore has been sanctioned. Work is progressing in various places. Tanks are being deepened, bunds are strengthened and sluices are repaired, to prevent loss of water due to seepage. Similarly, canals, which carry surplus water, are also repaired and sufficient funds are allotted for these works. It has been planned to allot Rs. 1,000 crore in the next three years for constructing check dams across rivers and odais. These check dams will recharge ground water in and around the check dams. In the first phase Rs.350 crore has to be allotted and the work is to start in the current year. The aim of the programme is to preserve the rainwater, which in turn will improve ground water level and provide enough water for drinking purposes and farm activities.

Unfortunately, opposition parties in the State are finding fault with the Government. According to them, no programme has been carried out by the Government. Only during the Amma Government, projects which are useful to people are implemented. During the 2016 Assembly elections, Idaya Deivam Amma announced that the grant for pregnant women will be increased to Rs. 18,000/- from Rs. 12,000/-. It has been implemented now. Similarly, for Amma two-wheelers for working women, a maximum subsidy of Rs.25,000/- is provided. The beneficiary can purchase any brand scooter and avail the subsidy. So far 3.34 lakh women have registered for the scooter. Within three years all the registered beneficiaries will get the scooter. All the schemes announced by Hon'ble Amma are being implemented by the Government.

I thank the District Collector for making excellent arrangements for the function. Though I am the Chief Minister of the State, I visit my constituency frequently. I tour the District and hear the grievances of people and settle them. Since all the 234 constituencies are under my control, I could not visit the constituency frequently but come to the constituency twice in a month. You should not blame me for not visiting the constituency frequently. As I am the Chief Minister of the State, I have to give equal importance to all constituencies. That is the reason I am not able to visit the constituency regularly. However, your demands will be brought to my notice and I shall take steps to redress them.

Thanking you for your affectionate welcome.

Nandri! Vanakkam!

Undergraduate courses in engineering in 3 more divisions of Anna University

Statement of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami

on 17.05.2018 *(English Translation)*.

The Hon'ble Amma Government always takes special care of the educational advancement of students who are economically backward. The AIADMK Government is taking sustained measures to impart such students technical education of international standard and to improve their technical skills and efficiency.

At present, the Anna University at Chennai, which is now in the fourth position in the country, has been offering through its 4 campuses in Chennai and 13 constituent Colleges in Tamil Nadu, undergraduate and post graduate courses in engineering.

But in Tirunelveli, Madurai, and Coimbatore regions, only post graduate courses in engineering are available. Representations have been received by the Tamil Nadu Government from the poor students of these divisions that undergraduate courses should be started in these divisions also for their convenience. Taking these representations into consideration, the State Government has decided to start undergraduate courses along with post-graduate courses in these divisions also.

From the current academic year (2018-2019), I have ordered the engineering colleges in these three regions to start 4 undergraduate courses also. In each course, 60 students will be admitted.

From the current academic year, in the counselling for admissions, totally 720 seats will be available for students of these three regions at the rate of 240 seats each for these 4 courses.

I am happy to state that through this Government initiative, economically backward students belonging to the poor strata of society will get the opportunity to have quality engineering education at an affordable cost.

Chief Minister celebrates the beauty of Nature at Kodai flower show

'Like flowers in bloom, Amma's Government reaches out to all sections of society'

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the inauguration of Kodaikkanal Summer Festival 2018 and the 57th Flower Show held at Kodaikkanal, Dindigul District on 19.05.2018 *(English Translation)*.

Bowing before the Goddess Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma,

Hon'ble Forest Minister Thiru. Dindigul C.Sreenivasan, who has delivered the Presidential address for the inaugural of the Kodaikkanal Summer Festival, 57th Flower Show and for the opening of completed works and laying foundation for the works to commence, Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Thiru. R.Doraikkannu, who has given good ideas in his speech, Principal Secretary to the Department of Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Thiru. Apurva Varma, Agricultural Production Commissioner and Principal Secretary to Government Thiru. Gagandeep Singh Bedi who has given an exposition of the scheme, Member of Parliament Thiru. M. Udhayakumar, Member of Parliament and President of Wakf Board Thiru. Anwar Raja, former Minister Thiru. Natham Viswanathan, former Mayor and Board President Thiru. Maruduraj, former MLA Thiru. Natarajan, Thiru. Dewan Basha, Thiru. Bharathi Murugan, Thiru. Jayaseelan, former MLAs Thiru. Natarajan and Thiru. Subburathinam, Thiru.A.P. Chellasamy, Thiru.Palanisamy, former MLA Thiru.Thavasi, former

Municipal Chairman Thiru.Sridhar, Thiru. Shanmugasundaram, Thiru. V.K.Murugan, former MPs and MLAs, party functionaries, former representatives of Local bodies, Executives of Co-operative Societies, Elders, Ladies, Newspaper and Media friends, Tourists, Dindigul District Collector Dr.T.G. Vinay I.A.S., who is to propose a vote of thanks, Government staff, - my humble respects to all of you.

Tamil Nadu is endowed with all natural resources as stated by Mahakavi Bharathiyar in his song - "Selvam ethanai undu puvimeedhe - avai yaavum padaitha Thamizhnadu". Till date, the State has not deviated from tradition and culture. With its mountain ranges (Kurinji region), forest areas (Mullai), green fields (Marudham), and long coastline (Neidhal), it has become an important tourist State for the whole world. Particularly, the hilly areas of Ooty, Yercaud , Kodaikkanal and the like attract more tourists. These tourists take back with them the greatness of Tamil Nadu's tradition, art and culture. These tourist centres play the premier role of spreading Tamil Nadu's fame all over the world. That is why Tamil Nadu Government pays greater attention to the maintenance and development of important tourist centres like Ooty, Kodaikkanal and Yercaud. Treating foreign tourists as our guests and to entertain them, the Tamil Nadu Government is arranging flower shows in Ooty, Yercaud and Kodaikkanal every year. Flowers from all over the world are brought and exhibited.

I inaugurated the flower show at Yercaud last week, on the 12th. Yesterday, it was at Ooty. Today, I have inaugurated the 57th flower show at Kodaikkanal.

In this 57th flower show, we see displayed many forms made up of a variety of flowers. Out of 60 genera of flowers, 800 varieties have been developed and cultivated and they have blossomed and are providing a feast to our eyes today. Balsum, primulas, begonia and ornamental plants are displayed in 5000 flower pots in the glass bungalow in a way as to make visitors ecstatic. Life-like figures of elephant,

jallikattu bull, peacock, dancing ladies and replicas of bullock cart and Taj Mahal, made up of two lakh flowers comprising carnation, gerbera, rose and other eye-catching colourful flowers are displayed here. The piece de resistance of the show is the 17 feet high silver falls of Kodaikkanal, made up of 10,000 carnation flowers. A 10 feet long dragon has also been created out of vegetables to regale the young and the old. A variety of forms made out of water melon, pumpkin, brinjal and many other raw fruits is also exhibited.

Hon'ble Forest Minister Thiru. Dindigul C.Sreenivasan, respected former Mayor Thiru.Maruduraj and former Minister Thiru. Natham Viswanathan made a representation for developing and modernizing the Sirumalai region here through the Tourism Department . The request will be examined.

I am happy that in all the three places, the flower show has been arranged in a very excellent way. I expect more tourists to turn up this year compared to last year.

The British, while ruling India, came to Kodaikkanal as they found the place had a suitable climate during summer. Many parts of this mountain still bear the names of the British.

Even during Sangam Age, this mountain was called "Kodai Malai" (summer mountain). However, a temperate climate, suitable for living, prevails here round the year. That is why tourists visit this place on all days. An artificial lake in the shape of a star, a high waterfall – Bear Shola, a 5,000 ft. deep ravine called suicide point, Kurinji Andavar Kovil which is situated in the area of rare Kurinji flowers that bloom once in 12 years, Thoon Paarai, Berijam lake inside the forest, Bison wells, Dolmen circle that takes us to the lifestyle of the primitive man who lived more than 5,000 years ago and many other such places attract tourists. The flower show is held in this Bryant park every year in the month of May with the sole purpose of making tourists, both inland and overseas, happy. This year, about 25,000

flowers, including those brought from different places, have been put on show.

As the Tamil Nadu Government has the responsibility of extending hospitality to the ever increasing tourist population, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma executed many schemes for Dindigul District that includes Kodaikkanal. Following her, this Government that follows the footsteps of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is also implementing welfare programmes for this District as and when opportunity presents itself. I inaugurated through video conferencing on 08.03.2017, 1,644 works worth Rs.103.93 crore. At the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Centenary function held at Dindigul on 31.12.2017, I inaugurated 115 works worth Rs.681.07 crore, laid foundation for 105 works worth Rs.187.29 crore and distributed welfare assistance of various Departments, amounting to Rs.63.76 crore to 24,521 beneficiaries.

Inaugurating the flower show and extolling the greatness of Kodaikkanal alone is not my job. I consider it my prime duty to identify the future needs of tourists visiting this place, devise schemes for them and implement them.

On this very day itself, I declared open the newly set up rose garden and a model demonstrative farm for cut flowers at a cost of Rs.10 crore on 10 acres of land. Fifteen thousand rose plants, belonging to more than 1,500 genera have been planted. Work has started on setting up an Amphi theatre for tourists to rest. There is no doubt that the intrinsic quality of the land and the rose plants that are planted on such a soil as also the pastures laid will be talked about with wonder at the all-India level.

For the development of Bryant Park, many works, including repair works and provision of new toilet facility, are taken up in the offices of the Horticulture Department, communication centre, dining hall, compound wall as also the provision of drinking water facility at a cost of Rs. 6.80 crore. Also, in the current financial year, development of children's park, installation of CCTV cameras and construction of parking lot for vehicles are to be taken up at a cost of Rs. 1 crore in Bryant Park.

In the Kodaikkanal Municipal area, e-Toilets have been set up for the convenience of tourists and they are in use. Keezhgundaru water supply development scheme works are on to solve the drinking water problem in Kodaikkanal Municipal area; under the solid waste management programme, development

of fertilizer storehouse has been taken up; to improve the basic structures in Kodaikkanal Municipality, paver block and black-topped roads and pipelines are being laid. In the interest of the conservancy staff of the Kodaikkanal Municipality, multi-storeyed apartments and modern gas crematorium are proposed to be constructed.

Under the Integrated Road Infrastructure Scheme, the renewing works of the Lake Road around the Star Lake, Paarikavai-Kukkal Road, Poolathur, Vadakavunji, Pannaikadu, Mangalamkombu and Pallangi Road have been completed by the Highways Department. Construction of retaining wall at 7 places on the Kodaikkanal-Palani Road and repairing of the main road – Kodaikkanal Malai Salai-Poolathur, Polur, Batlagundu and Thaandikudi Roads have been completed. Construction of a retaining wall on Batalagundu- Thaandikudi road is about to be completed. Repair works on Kosan-Kilavarai road are going on.

To find a permanent solution to the traffic congestion in Kodaikkanal, I am happy to announce that a multi-tier parking lot for vehicles and a commercial complex will be constructed at the Transport Corporation's own place near the bus stand.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma issued orders in 2015-2016 to renew and widen the old road from Periyakulam to Perumpallam via Adukkam for a length of 36 km as an alternative route to Kodaikkanal so as to reduce travel time and traffic congestion. Accordingly, work on 29 kms was completed and brought to public use. Work on the remaining 7 km stretch will commence soon. To prevent road damages during rainy season due to erosion and landslides, Rs.44 crore has been allotted

on 07.05.2018 for taking up permanent flood prevention works like construction of culverts, retaining walls and storm water drainages. Work on them will commence soon.

I am happy to announce that orders have been issued to convert the 38 km long road from Dindigul to Natham into a two-way traffic road and to lay a separate footpath for the Thaipoosam devotees at a cost of Rs.250 crore. Soon, the works will start. Likewise, separate paths will be laid on either side of the road for the devotees of Thaipoosam and Uthiram by widening Dharapuram-Palani road so that they can carry on their pilgrimage uninterruptedly by averting the possibility of accidents.

The wealth of a Country is gauged by its ores below the ground and the beauty by its natural resources above the ground. The long green fields and the variety of foodgrains we get through them, rivers like Cauvery, Thenpennai, Paalaru,Vaigai and Tamirabarani, dense forests, hill resorts like Ooty, Kodaikkanal, Yercaud and the seashores that proclaim our heritage and tradition are the factors that make Tamil Nadu a beautiful State. It is the duty of every individual in this Country to protect such natural resources that provide us wealth along with charm. However much science may develop, man can never create these oceans, mountains and forests. But with science, we can protect and maintain Nature in an excellent way. Safeguarding Nature without destruction and mutilation is the gratitude that we can show to it. Every individual should have it as his goal in life to plant at least one sapling, tend to it and protect it.

We have many lessons to learn from Nature. There is no selfishness in Nature. No tree bears fruits for itself; no bee collects honey for its own sake; no flower plant blooms for its own personal happiness. Only people enjoy all these benefits. We should realize that if we create a natural environment around us by giving utmost

importance to Nature and providing greater space to it to live and grow, such localities will be beautiful and serene. With this idea of environmental protection, the Government continues to conduct such flower shows. In this pleasant hour, let us take a pledge: "We will be friends to Nature; we will protect Nature".

Looking at the array of colourful flowers here, I am reminded of Hon'ble Amma. The flower is a common symbol of Nature, going beyond race, religion, language, country and time. I wish to point out that Hon'ble Amma too remained the symbol of love with affection and attachment towards all creatures. Like the flowers which do not blossom for their own sake, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma did not live for her own sake but for the people's sake.

This Government that follows the footprints of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is a friend of Nature and its protector.

Some selfish persons invoke the name of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, not only to eke out their livelihood but they daydream of capturing power in Tamil Nadu. They put up all possible shows to cheat their followers but people enjoy these shows as mere drama. A story will explain this better.

In the days of monarchy, a case came before the panchayatdars in a Town. One party said: "Sir, I purchased a land from this person and when I tilled it, I found a treasure trove. I had purchased the land and not the treasure trove and hence it should go to him". The other party remonstrated: "How can that be; I have already sold the land".

Perplexed by the nature of the case, the panchayatdars postponed the case for a week. In the interregnum, the case became the talk of the town with surprised comments at the existence of such good persons even in such bad days.

When the case came up for hearing the next week, the two parties came to the panchayat quarrelling. The seller of the land told the panchayat that though he sold the land, the treasure was his. The purchaser said : "I have purchased the land; hence everything in the land is mine". The general public and the panchayat members were astounded. They started thinking what could have happened in the one week that had gone by for the two parties to take a diametrically opposite stand.

One of the panchayatdars, a goldsmith rose and said: " Sir, that is nothing; the person who examined the treasure trove last week said they were all copper coins. As there was no use from copper coins, they showed themselves off as good persons. Yesterday, I examined the treasure again and firmly said that they are all gold coins. This has unmasked their real face". The panchayatdars decreed: " Both of you can't claim ownership to this treasure, obtained without labour. It belongs to the people of this town who work very hard. We will give it to the people".

The people will stand by those who work for the party and Government; they will extend support only to such persons. Stating that people's support which is like a treasure trove will not be available to non-workers, I convey

my thanks to the good hearts who have arranged this flower show function in an excellent way.

Hon'ble Forest Minister, speaking earlier, putforth many view points beautifully and clearly. I feel it will be appropriate to list the schemes implemented during Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's rule and by Amma's Government after Amma's demise.

At present, opposition parties charge that law and order in Tamil Nadu has deteriorated. But compared to other States, law and order in Tamil Nadu is excellent. A scheme was brought forth to award the best Police Stations among the several thousand stations in the Country with prizes. Police Stations in Tamil Nadu were also scrutinized. The Coimbatore R.S.Puram Police Station in Tamil Nadu was adjudged the best in the whole Country and was given the first prize. The Anna Nagar Police Station came fifth and got a prize. Since Police constables functioned superbly, these Police Stations got the prizes. This shows the extent to which law and order is maintained in the State. Amma's Government remains one that establishes law and order through speedy Police action wherever and whatever mistakes take place.

Presenting various demands, Amma's Government is getting many schemes from the Central Government. No State Government Cable TV Corporation has received digital telecasting licence from the Centre. But when Amma's Government made a request, the Centre sanctioned the licence. This has helped the common people to view more channels at low rates.

Amma's Government has allocated Rs.234 crore to help the youth start industries of their own through credit facilities routed through THADCO.

Amma's Government has issued crop loans to the tune of Rs.5,813 crore to 9,84,909 farmers. The intention is to help farmers get a high yield through timely sowing through timely credit facility. Last year, there was a severe drought of a severity not seen in the past 140 years. The crops had withered and farmers made representations for drought relief. On the basis of that demand, Amma's Government released Rs.2,247 crore as drought relief. Likewise, it was Amma's Government which got the maximum compensation of Rs.3,265 crore to farmers through the crop insurance scheme. This is the highest at the National level. Amma's Government is taking steps to get this fund for more farmers.

In Dindigul District also, farmers have grown coconut trees in a large scale. Stating that they don't have adequate income from coconut cultivation, coconut farmers sought Government's permission to tap 'neera' from the trees to get higher income. That permission was granted by Amma's Government.

To save rain water without wasting a drop, 1,158 farm ponds have been set up at a cost of Rs.136 crore. During the monsoon season, rain water drains into the sea wastefully. To conserve that water, check dams are constructed across odais and rivers and the stored water helps rise the ground water table. Farmers get required quantum of water; people get drinking water.

For this, Amma's Government has allotted Rs.1,000 crore ,spread over a period of 3 years. In the first phase, Amma's Government has allotted Rs.350 crore for construction of check dams.

For the benefit of farmers, Amma's Government has launched the combined farm scheme (Koottupannai thittam).

During the drought period, farmers have to sink bore wells to a depth of 1,000 ft. and even then water availability is only small. With that meagre water they have to cultivate. To utilize that water properly, drip irrigation scheme was introduced. Amma's Government gives 100 per cent subsidy, if the farmer using the drip irrigation system has one acre of land; the subsidy is 75 per cent for higher acreages. Only Amma's Government has brought about this scheme for raising crops with meagre quantum of water.

Likewise, tractor and agriculture implements, seeds and fertilizers are given to farmers at subsidized rates. Agriculturists look at Amma's Government as an inspiring Government for rising production.

Solar electric motors too are given to farmers at subsidized rates. As the District Minister Thiru.Dindigul Sreenivasan pointed out in his speech made earlier, agriculture has grown in Tamil Nadu because of the plethora of schemes made available to farmers. As the farmers carried out agricultural operations in the best manner, Tamil Nadu has become the number one State in foodgrain production. It has also received the Central Government's highest award of Krishi Karman in this regard.

Likewise, we plant tree saplings on the Birth Anniversary of Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. It is our duty to grow trees. There will be rain only when there is abundance in Nature; rain alone gives us water and only when there is water, farmers take up agriculture and drinking water needs are also be met. Hence to enrich Nature's wealth, Amma's Government plants tree saplings on the Birth Anniversary of Hon'ble Amma to commemorate her age. This year 70 lakh tree saplings were planted to mark her 70th birthday. The Hon'ble Prime Minister himself came and participated in the sapling planting function. Likewise, for handloom and powerloom weavers too electricity is given at subsidized rates.

Under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Medical Insurance scheme, Amma's Government has given Rs.930 crore, helping 6,51,000 persons get treatment. This amount has been given for the poor and downtrodden people to enable them get the appropriate treatment in private hospitals.

I wish to state that Amma's Government is taking steps to get from the Centre about Rs.1 lakh crore for the development of State and National highways in Tamil Nadu as also for high-rise roads and harbours.

We celebrated the centenary of Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. exceedingly well in 30 Districts. Through this, I met the people of these 30 Districts. I laid the foundation, on those occasions, for 3,200 works

worth Rs.5,712.90 crore. I announced then that prisoners who have completed 10 years of in prison will be released in connection with the Birth Anniversary of Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. They will be released soon.

We have created conditions for 96,340 youths to get employment opportunities through investments of Rs.62,738 crore by 61 companies. Amma's Government provides a solatium of Rs.5 lakh each for deaths of construction workers while on duty.

Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma declared in the 2016 election manifesto that assistance to the un-employed would be doubled. This benefited 57,762 persons and the amount allotted for that was Rs.14.86 crore.

Members of Parliament who spoke earlier to me said this beautifully. As Tamil Nadu is a State dependent on agriculture – 65 per cent of works pertain to agriculture – Amma's Government has issued orders permitting farmers to dredge the lakes and tanks in their areas and take away the sediment free of cost. This order is by way of meeting farmers' long standing demand. The farmers applied these dredged sediments as natural fertilizer in their fields. This has helped boost production.

Not only this. We have designed a scheme, called kudimaramathu for taking up as a pilot project, 1,519 lakes and tanks on behalf of Government for dredging at a cost of Rs. 100 crore and save rain water in those deepened lakes and tanks. The Irrigation Farmers Associations in the respective areas were asked to implement the scheme. The funds were allotted to them. Also, in deference to farmers' request to extend the scheme, 1,519 more lakes have been taken up with financial assistance from Amma's Government. The works of the farmers' associations include deepening of the lakes, strengthening bunds as also those of their supply channels, de-silting of the supply channels, draining surplus waters, and repairing weirs. For repairing of weirs and de-silting of supply channels, Amma's Government has allotted Rs.325 crore. I wish to state that the whole scheme is implemented with the full participation of farmers.

Green houses have been constructed with solar panels at a cost of Rs. 840 crore. The Government proposes to celebrate "Tamil Nadu Golden Jubilee Year" as today 50 years have been completed since the State was named 'Tamil Nadu'.

I wish to mention a few steps taken by Hon'ble Amma's Government.

A revolution has been ushered in the field of education. There will be all-round development if education develops. To provide education to all, Amma's Government has allotted more funds to this Department. From the days of Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's rule till date, 116 primary schools have been upgraded as middle level schools, 829 middle level schools into high schools and 402 high schools into higher secondary schools. Upgradation of schools have increased the percentage of enrollment of students – in primary schools it is 99.85 per cent, in middle

level schools 99.11, in high schools 93.15 and in higher secondary 77.64 per cent. These are all steps taken during Amma's rule.

To take higher education to children from poor and middle class families to whom education in private colleges is beyond reach due to financial constraints, 76 arts and science colleges have been opened from the days of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's rule till date and thus Amma's Government has created conditions for the poor to prosecute higher education at low expense. This has increased enrollment in higher education in Tamil Nadu to 46.94 per cent, the highest in the whole of India.

When Puratchi Thalaivi Amma took over the administration in 2011, the percentage of students in higher education was 21. As Puratchi Thalaivi Amma brought about a renaissance in education and as a result of upgradation of schools, opening up of new Government arts and science colleges and creation of medical, veterinary, polytechnic, agriculture and other colleges through Government, enrollment of students from poor families has increased in higher education. The Central Government has declared this. With pride, I wish to say, on this occasion that Amma's Government has turned Tamil Nadu into an excellent State in education.

In the medical sector also, our performance is excellent. From 2011 till date, 254 primary health centres have been newly set up to provide appropriate treatment to rural people in their place itself. Of the existing primary health centres, 153 have been upgraded as 30-bed hospitals. Newly started Government Hospitals are 65; newly started medical colleges by Amma's Government are 6. In the organ transplant surgery field we have been bagging the first prize consecutively for 3 years at the all India level. A labourer in Athur region of Dindigul District had lost both his hands. Through a cadaver organ transplant, both the hands have been restored to him. The transplant surgery took place two months back and he is well. From this, one should ponder to what extent Amma's Government has recorded achievement in the medical field. I wish to congratulate, on this occasion, the Government Doctors who have done such an excellent service. There is no history of having fixed both the hands to a person in a Government Hospital at the National level. Amma's Government has thus created history. Heart transplant surgery has been performed to 110 persons, kidney for 318 persons, liver to 161 persons, lungs to 102 persons and pancreas to 7 persons. Besides, hospitals on wheels are functioning in 356 Taluks. Tamil Nadu is foremost in organ transplant surgery. By getting 5,933 important organs from 156 cadaver donors, Tamil Nadu leads the rest of the States in the Country in organ donation for the third time and has got a prize also for that, from the Central Government. Like these, Amma's Government is implementing numerous schemes.

Hon'ble Forest Minister mentioned about the Cauvery water issue. Cauvery river is the source of drinking water for twenty Districts in Tamil Nadu. Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., requested the Central Government, through a letter in 1986 to

constitute a Tribunal to resolve the Cauvery Water dispute. The Union Government set up a Tribunal and it gave an interim award, directing the Karnataka Government to release 205 tmc ft. of water to Tamil Nadu. It gave its final award in 2007. The Central Government kept the Tribunal's judgment in cold storage; delayed the publication of the order in the Central Government gazette. Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma filed a case in the Supreme Court and it gave its verdict in 2013. It directed the Centre to immediately gazette the Tribunal's judgment. The Centre complied with the order. Hon'ble Amma urged the Centre to initiate action for the release of 192 tmc ft. of water as per the final award of the Tribunal. As no action was forthcoming from the Centre, Hon'ble Amma filed a case in the Supreme Court. As a result of effective representation with all proof by Amma's Government through efficient senior advocates, the Supreme Court gave a favourable judgment yesterday in a way as to bring to a close the 32-year-long Cauvery water dispute. I am duty bound to say that Tamil Nadu Government has got this judgment from the Supreme Court.

For the people of Tamil Nadu and for the farmers, the leader who went on a fast continuously for 80 hours at the M.G.R. memorial on the Marina was Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Many people claim they have done good things for farmers. But the only Chief Minister who did good to farmers was Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma waged a court battle to get our rightful share of water and she fought till her very last breath. Hon'ble Amma's Government continued the righteous battle and won. I wish to state that more than any other political party, the AIADMK took greater interest to get Cauvery river water. The AIADMK Government got a historic judgment, as decided by Hon'ble Amma, from the Supreme Court yesterday. We will be ever grateful to Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma for getting this historic judgment.

Though Hon'ble Amma had shed her mortal coils, her achievements will be cherished forever by the people. That is the honour leaders get. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma deserves that honour.

Tourists have come in large numbers to Kodaikkanal. As their numbers increase every year, the District Minister respected Dindigul Sreenivasan has requested that this region should be beautified and more schemes should be implemented. The Government will examine all these requests and take suitable action. Amma's Government will take necessary action to beautify the hill resorts of Ooty, Yercaud and Kodaikkanal and make them attractive not only for the people of Tamil Nadu, but also for tourists from other States and Countries. With these words I take leave of you, thanking you for giving this opportunity to me. ■

Nandri! Vanakkam!